
CROSSPIECE



The Parish Magazine of St James's Church, Cambridge

December 2019 — January 2020

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Winter
Landscape
between
Upware
and
Reach

Words from the Vicarage

Dear Readers,

People often say that the real meaning of Christmas has been lost. What do they mean? What are they referring to when they talk of the *real meaning*? Probably something to do with Jesus' birth, peace and goodwill and quality family time. "Real meaning" implies an authentic or original meaning to Christmas.

I believe the real meaning (or perhaps the real reason or purpose) is connected to children. We are celebrating the birth of a child, but we are also recognising the child within us. In school halls across the country it is children who are telling the nativity story; they are *participating in* the Christmas story.

At Christmas we've just come through Advent, a period of waiting and looking ahead. When Christmas comes then it's time to get stuck in, to get involved, to participate. Many people feel that preparing for Christmas as consumers has become a long and drawn out process.

The whole Christmas story encapsulates tiring journeys, the expectancy, the struggle, the wait. Also, the preparation: something is coming, a big event, and we need to get ready,

to be prepared. Christmas is both a struggle and a joy. It is the misery of waiting and it is the excitement of what will come. It was for Mary and Joseph, and it is now, for us.

When you watch the next nativity production, maybe you can wonder, just like the children who are telling the story, who would *you* like to be? Who do *you* identify with? How would you tell the nativity? Jesus said 'Unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven'. That is where we find a real meaning for Christmas: deep within each one of us there is a child bursting with enthusiasm, filled with awe and wonder at the thrill of being part of God's Kingdom.

Revd Steven Rothwell



God is listening! But.....

This notice can now be found in most French churches:



En entrant dans cette église , il est possible que vous entendiez l'appel de Dieu. Par contre, il n'est pas susceptible de vous contacter par téléphone. Merci d'avoir éteint votre téléphone. Si vous souhaitez parler à Dieu, entrez, choisissez un endroit tranquille et parle lui. Si vous souhaitez le voir, envoyez lui un SMS en conduisant.

Translation:

It is possible that on entering this church, you may hear the call of God. On the other hand, it is not likely that he will contact you by phone. Thank you for turning off your phone. If you would like to talk to God, come in, choose a quiet place, and talk to him. If you would like to see him, send him a text while driving.

RIP

In recent weeks we have lost several long-standing members of the St James community. We remember Sylvia Nix, unable to attend church for some years, but grateful for the contact and ministry of the pastoral team. We have also lost Geoff Mason, Stan Howchin and Ray Revell, who had been part of the congregation

until more recently. We remember them with affection and gratitude and pray for their families at this time.

In this issue of Crosspiece we are glad to be able to publish some tributes.

Stanley Clifford Howchin

8th November 1920—19th October 2019



Stan grew up in and around Bury St Edmunds and, perhaps under the influence of his train-driving father, Stan developed a life-long enthusiasm for trains. As a young man he moved to Cambridge and worked in local cinemas, first as an usher but then as a projectionist. He had to take rolls of film from one cinema to another. At one point in his life he had polio but he was convinced that fresh air and exercise would keep him fit and healthy. He kept up an exercise

regime throughout his life, whether it was repeatedly walking up and down steps or taking long walks.

Stan met the love of his life, Gwen, purely by chance one day as they were both waiting for a public loo to become vacant. They got talking and discovered that they were both working for Robert Sayle's – Gwen in accounts and Stan in carpets. Stan continued working at Robert Sayle until he retired. They were married for over 60 years and Stan was devoted to Gwen. They shared a love for ballroom dancing and although Stan still loved trains and train journeys, he refrained from indulging in that hobby because it wasn't something that Gwen was particularly keen on and Stan didn't want to be apart from her. It was only some time after Gwen died that Stan re-embarked upon travelling around the UK on trains once again.

Stan and Gwen moved into their home at Godwin Way soon after the house was built, when there were still few other houses in that area and no roads. They watched the school being built and raised money to help build St James church. Stan became part of the fabric of the church community and served as churchwarden in his 80's.

He was conscripted to the RAF and served as a mechanic spending some time in Africa. This part of life he kept fairly quiet about and only really talked about it in recent years. Perhaps this represented one of the harder times in his life. There were times when his resolve and

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endurance were tested, not least at the time of the death of his only son, Alan.

Some time ago a man in Canada discovered a family connection to Stan and made some enquiries. It turned out that he was a 19 year old in the air force and he bunked with Stan, and he remembered Stan as being the one who looked out for him.

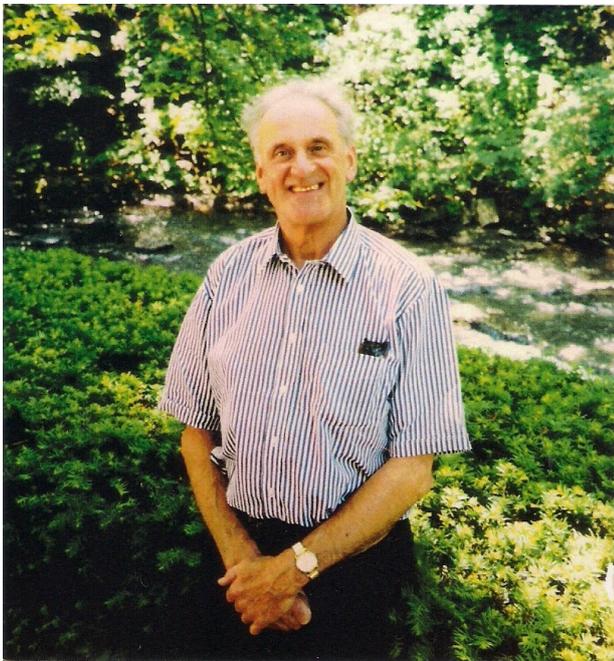
Stan was both thoughtful and private but he also had some exceptional talents and possessed creative ingenuity which was expressed in different ways. He was a gifted clothes-maker, creating many designs for coats, dresses and curtains and duvet covers, often using bold colours and innovative decoration. Michael, his nephew, mentioned how Stan worked his way through 3 sewing machines, which indicates how prolific he was. Stan was recognised locally as being smart and dapper in appearance, taking pride in the way he dressed.

But he was also known for his devotion to Gwen. His care for her was exemplified during the time she was ill and he would bring fresh

flowers home each day and when she could no longer read he would read to her. A proud man he didn't like fuss but was attentive to detail and looked out for others. He leaves a gap in our community that only he could fill.

Postscript: Stan's creative gifts benefitted his church too. He made the clergy vestments when St James started up as a church, and they may still be in use. He also made the curtains in the Milton room, and the first ones in the Study Centre. He was a meticulous decorator, painting the interior of the rooms quite recently.

Another snippet from the early days of our church: Stan Howchin, together with Stan Robertson, also ran a very successful and popular youth group at St James in the early days, with (according to him) up to 80 children attending. It was open to all comers and they had a gramophone and table tennis table, and afterwards they had to clean the nave floor and put the equipment away, possibly helped by their wives.



Geoffrey William Mason

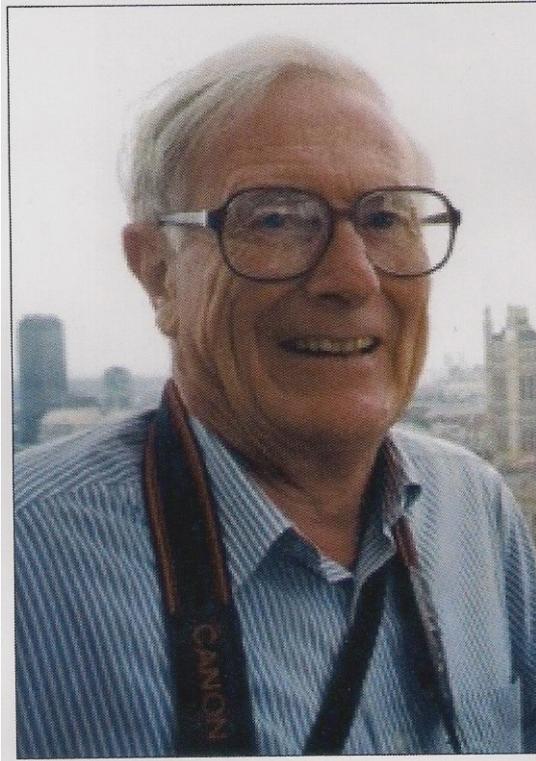
24th September 1926 - 25th October 2019

Geoff's funeral took place at Cambridge crematorium, organised by his sons Christopher and Jonathan. It was attended by a number of members of St James' Church. Geoff had been a loyal member of the church for many years but as his health declined after the death of his beloved wife Gill, he was more confined to home. He was well looked after by his carer, Pearl, who became like a daughter to him.

Geoff was born in St Ives and like his father worked as a gas engineer. Hence the decorative Victorian lamp standard lovingly installed in his front garden as a memento of former days. Geoff was a kind and friendly man, enjoying the social contacts at church. He was an enormous support to Gill, encouraging her creative musical talents. Together they often attended the Buxton Festival, where they could enjoy their shared love of opera.

Raymond John Revell (3 July 1932 – 29 October 2019)

A shortened version of the tribute given by Ray's son Simon at the memorial service



Dad was born in Woking on 3rd July 1932, and lived in various houses in Middlesex and Surrey. He attended Acton Grammar during the war, and attended Mill Hill School from age 13 in Sept 1945. As an only child he enjoyed boarding immensely, valuing the companionship of his fellow students and making some lifelong friends.

While at school he developed an interest in locomotives, regularly visiting engine yards and mainline stations with his friends to train-spot. Then at Reading University he studied horticulture, but decided to do his National Service before university. After basic training with the Royal Artillery he elected to join the education corps. Dad chose to go abroad and he spent 18 months in Kenya and Tanganyika (now Tanzania) teaching English to the soldiers. Dad made the most of his time in East Africa studying flora and completing an ascent of Mount Kilimanjaro.

Dad took up his place at Reading in October 1953, and promptly met Margaret on the dancefloor during freshers' week. Dad had a busy extracurricular timetable at Reading, representing the University at squash & playing trombone with some fellow musicians in "The Merrydowners" jazz band.

Both Mum & Dad graduated in 1956. They married on 27th July 1957 and moved to Lavenham to a flat above the bookshop. While there Dad joined his first church choir. A short teaching stint in Hythe followed, then he moved to Plymouth college to teach botany and zoology. During six very happy years in Devon three children were born – Susan, Simon and Julian. It was while in Devon that Dad developed his enduring interest in lepidoptery, or moths.

Dad had a yen to return to Africa, and was appointed to a teaching post in Bo, Sierra Leone's second largest town, and in 1967 Dad, Mum and three children under five set sail from Liverpool and arrived in Freetown, Sierra Leone's capital, nine days later. They moved into the family house on Bo school's compound. Dad told us about the boys arriving to register at the beginning of term, then disappearing to travel around the country to collect money from relatives to pay school fees. It was a selective school requiring the passing of entrance exams, but this detail had to be gently explained sometimes to paramount chiefs arriving with bodyguards and insisting that their sons be given places at the school.

The family acquired a number of unusual pets while in Bo – a scaly anteater or pangolin, a mongoose and a civet cat. Dad could have happily stayed in Sierra Leone but decided to come back to England in 1969, wanting Susan to

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start school and sensing that Mum had had quite enough. Dad flew back for an interview at the Perse and was duly appointed Head of Biology. He took up his position at The Perse in September 1969, where he remained until retirement 26 years later. The family settled in Linton where they lived for twelve very happy years. Dad joined the choir at St Mary's church, Linton, followed at various stages by all three children.

Dad and the family presented an odd spectacle at times – making trips out to remote locations in rural Cambridgeshire at dusk, armed with a white sheet, tripod and a very bright lamp and generator – no strange ritual, but moth collecting and recording. His enthusiasm was so infectious, all children could get excited about trapping a moth in a pot and rushing it to Dad to be identified. On one such similar expedition in Namibia he discovered a new species of moth, which he later named *Ectropona Revelli*. Clearly mothing, choral singing, locomotives, trombone playing & botany were insufficient - Dad also developed an interest in philately.

Having a teacher as a father we were so lucky. He had time to spend with us, learning, being curious and generally larking about. As a teacher he inspired many, encouraging pupils to think for themselves, form and answer their own questions and follow where their curiosity took them.

Dad carried music with him everywhere –

in his head – and would break out into humming or snatches of song. If it wasn't the humming it was Dad's marvellous laugh that was clearly audible. Former colleagues remember his cheerfulness and conviviality. And who could forget his stage appearances – he was the "very model of a modern major-general"!

In 1982, Dad, Mum and Julian moved closer to school and took up residence in Beaumont Road. Dad joined the choir here at St James, in which he sang for over 30 years. He loved the music but, more than that, he valued the companionship. The Revell children mirrored Dad's zest for travel, culminating in international weddings in New Zealand & Namibia as well as closer to home in Linton. Dad was a devoted grandfather, never happier than when spending time with his many grandchildren. As an only child, the family meant a great deal to him.

Dad and Mum together made many journeys to be with family in New Zealand, Namibia & China, always interested to learn about other places and cultures. Having finished his teaching career in 1995 retirement provided more time for his many interests & more travel.

Mum & Dad's marriage has been an inspiration to us all, full of love, devotion and happiness. We will always remember Dad's openness and tolerance and interest in everyone and everything around him. He will be dearly missed but always fondly remembered.



After hard work carving pumpkins and doing crafts a delicious lunch at the October Pumpkin Picnic

The Auction of Promises and Gifts

It was splendid that the recent Auction was successful in raising over £2,239 for church funds, but that was not the only benefit. Many of the congregation have enjoyed the cakes and meals provided, others have purchased goods, had lessons or booked the holiday offered. Assistance with tasks and repairs was much appreciated. Others had the chance to tour the colleges with special guidance or attend Evensong in King's College Chapel. We had a splendid visit to Emmanuel College.

The Auction thus provided opportunities and benefits as well as raising much needed funds, so thanks are due to Pam for organising the event.

Jackie Bartholomew



The lake in the grounds of Emmanuel College

(photo by Jackie)

The Dining Hall at Emmanuel College

(photo by Jackie)



The Restless Wave – a novel by Sarah Meyrick

As I get older I find it interesting to follow the lives and careers of my friends' children and grandchildren. I was at school with Sarah Meyrick's mother, when we were both eleven years old and upwards, and although we lost touch after school, and drifted apart, our paths have crossed since then, so we have met from time to time. Sarah has been writing for the *Church Times* for many years, and I have always read her articles with interest. She has recently started writing novels, and so Chris gave me a copy of her latest one, "*The Restless Wave*", published this year, the 75th anniversary of D-Day, in memory of two members of her own family, who took part in that extraordinary feat, one of them the grandfather, whom I met as a child.

"*The Restless Wave*" covers 100 years in the life of a family told through the stories of Edward, Hope and Nell. It is chiefly about Edward, born in colonial India, army chaplain in World War 2, Anglican vicar and finally Bishop, whose life and experiences profoundly affect his family down the succeeding generations. But it is also the story of Hope, idealistic hippy dropout, and Nell, harassed acting headteacher of a failing school. Their respective lives reflect and illuminate the events and concerns of their times, and so shed light on much of the social history of this country through the past century. At the same time the different characters are so deftly portrayed, that their stories are full of

interest and carry the narrative along. There are shocks along the way, and only gradually do the links between the characters become clear.

The story hops disconcertingly backwards and forwards through the years, for example from 1944 to 2015, and then back to 1915, but the reader becomes accustomed to this as the action unfolds and the three characters grow more familiar. This device ensures that various actions and reactions are understood better as the story progresses.

Sarah writes well and is a pleasure to read. She has the gift of conveying a great deal in a few words. This is not a long book, although it reads like a family saga, and covers so much of three very diverse lives. There are some delicious touches of humour, and also of pathos. Reading it one understands the characters emotionally and empathises with them; even so the final revelation took me by surprise, and I should be interested to know whether other readers foresee it. Sarah Meyrick deserves to be better known.

I can thoroughly recommend this book to anyone who enjoys a good read, and is interested in the ways in which our lives influence those of the next generation. It would make an excellent Christmas present.

Mary Calladine

Winter election

crackling leaves, chasing each other like crazed mice
tripping over crevices between the flagstones
the sun is reticent, the wind is keen
I wrap my aging bones

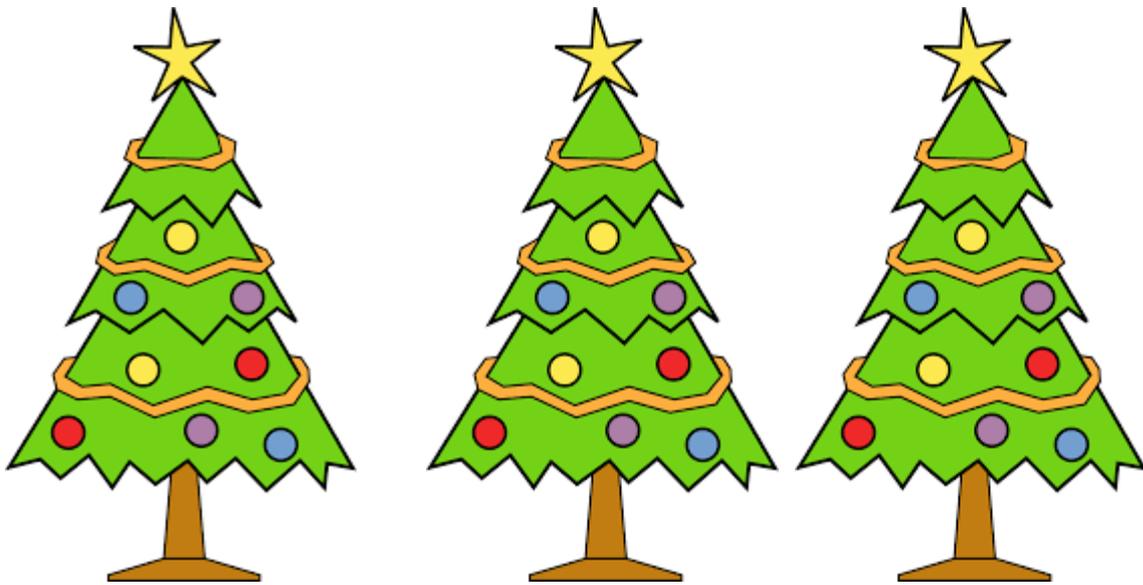
"Fascism is over!" squeaked the mice in the wind
I will get up and go now
I will go the loneliest isle to be found
you have no need to fear the snow now

and the sun gently reappeared
saying "I am in favour of human rights
understanding, permanent democracy
I will hold you through the nights."

Linda Appleby

St James' Church, Wulfstan Way

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL



10.30 am—4.30 pm

SATURDAY 14th DECEMBER

with
**Christmas
Market**

**Refreshments
Wreath-making
Visit Santa
Carol Singing**

Free Admission—everyone welcome

Traidcraft: moving forward and continuing our mission

St James' Church has been a fairtrade church for many years, and has supported the work of Traidcraft. Until recently we had a monthly stall, and the decision to discontinue this coincided with falling sales here and the serious downturn in the business of Traidcraft. A lot of painful decisions had to be made: staff at the headquarters in Gateshead were reduced in number and it was hard to confront the fact that it would be impossible to continue to work with some of their overseas producers. Some had been trading partners for many years and Traidcraft had helped them to grow their businesses, improve products, pay better wages and support their communities. Not all these relationships could be sustained.

It was a painful time for Traidcraft's employees in the UK and its partners in the developing world, and meant a total rethinking of the business, its mission, and the challenges of the modern global economy. How to rebuild a trading company that still supports producers in the developing world and helps them to lift themselves and their communities out of poverty?

Here are some of the basic truths that have focussed minds and hearts at Traidcraft (with quotations from CEO Robin Roth)

The organisation is *"committed to telling the truth about climate change. For some farming communities the effects of climate change are already catastrophic, and their livelihoods have been destroyed, or soon will be. We can still act. We need to stop denying the science. We need to stop pretending that this isn't our problem."*

"Part of the solution is that we need to consume less." Cutting down on flights and unnecessary car journeys, buying fewer clothes, and eating less meat are steps we can take. "As a business it is counter-intuitive to preach the need to consume less. But it is the right thing to do."

"We work with small farmer organisations who have pioneered circular farming techniques: putting carbon back in the ground through re-forestation and composting. It is possible to grow carbon neutral food, but it isn't easy, and while you will need to pay more, it is far cheaper than the real "cost" of cheap, subsidised industrial food. We see stewardship of the earth and its resources as a clear expression of our Christian faith."

Traidcraft began by challenging the orthodoxy that you couldn't be competitive if you paid a proper wage to farmers and artisans. We broke that rule. The rules we need to break today are different; today's rule says that we can consume voraciously and stupidly."

"We reject and object to the mindless feeding frenzy that is Black Friday. That day we will be closing our warehouse and addressing our carbon footprint by gardening at our HQ and addressing social injustice by running a refreshment station at Newcastle Cathedral."

Jennifer Day

Have a look at Traidcraft's catalogue at www.traidcraftshop.co.uk



Delicious pumpkin soup at the October Pumpkin Picnic!

Thank you to the cooks, Judy, Mary and Barbara, and to those who brought things to share.

Thank you to those who helped with the craft activities.

Thank you to all the families who came and made it such an enjoyable half-term event.

Contacts at St James's Church

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DEADLINE FOR FEBRUARY —
MARCH 2020 ISSUE of **CROSSPIECE**

Thursday 23rd January

The Editors welcome articles, news items and photographs for inclusion in the magazine. If possible these should be in digital form, photos and words in separate files. However we can accept typed or handwritten items and photographic prints.

Safeguarding officer:

Jill Bradley 07971 013645
email: happybeadsuk@gmail.com

Director of Music: Position vacant

The Music Group:

Grae Worster on mgw1@cam.ac.uk and 846295

Church & Community Activities

Choir practice:

Mondays 6.30 –7.30pm

Meditation group: Fridays 1.30-2.00

Beavers (6-8 yrs):

16thcmbridgebeavers@gmail.com

Cubs (8-11 yrs) at QE School:

Stephen Harrison 07548 765421

Scouts (10½—14) at QE School:

16thcambridgescouts@gmail.com

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**ADVERTS FOR LOCAL SUPPLIERS &
SERVICES**

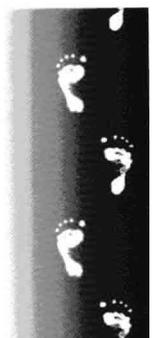
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Available for home appointments



St James's Church, Cambridge: Calendar for December 2019— January 2020

A warm welcome is extended to everyone to join us for our Christmas services – please see below for details.

Morning Prayer is said on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at 9.30 am. Everyone is welcome.

December

1st 1st SUNDAY OF ADVENT

- 8.00 am Eucharist (BCP)
- 8.45 am Advent breakfast in the Study Centre
- 10.00 am All Age Eucharist
- 3rd 2.00 pm Friendship Café
- 4th 10.15 am Carol Service at Dunstan Court
- 7.00 pm Advent discussion group in the Milton Room
- 6th 1.30 pm Meditation Group

8th 2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT

- 8.00 am Eucharist
- 8.45 am Advent breakfast in the Study Centre
- 10.00 am Sung Eucharist with Sunday School
- 11th 10.15 am Eucharist
- 7.00 pm Advent discussion group in the Milton Room

12th CHURCH IN USE ALL DAY FOR POLLING PURPOSES

- 13th 1.30 pm Meditation Group

14th 10.30 am – 4.30 pm Christmas Tree Festival with Market

15th 3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT

- 8.00 am Eucharist
- 8.45 am Advent breakfast in the Study Centre
- 10.00 am Sung Eucharist with Sunday School
- 18th 10.15 am Eucharist
- 7.00 pm Advent discussion group in the Milton Room
- 19th 7.30 pm Men's Beer Ministry at QE Pub

22nd 4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT

- 8.00 am Eucharist
- 8.45 am Advent breakfast in the Study Centre
- 10.00 am Sung Eucharist
- 4.00 pm Choir rehearsal for Carol Service

6.30 pm Carol Service followed by mulled wine and mince pies

24th Christmas Eve

5.00 pm Crib Service. Children are invited to come dressed as a nativity character

11.00 pm Midnight Mass

25th Christmas Day

10.00 am All Age Eucharist

29th The 1st SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

- 8.00 am Eucharist
- 10.00 am Sung Eucharist

January 2020

We wish everyone a Happy New Year

1st No mid week Eucharist

5th EPIPHANY

- 8.00 am Eucharist (BCP)
- 10.00 am All Age Eucharist
- 7th 2.00 pm Friendship Café
- 8th 10.15 am Eucharist at Dunstan Court
- 10th 1.30 pm Meditation Group

12th BAPTISM OF CHRIST / 1st SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

- 8.00 am Eucharist
- 10.00 am Sung Eucharist with Sunday School
- 15th 10.15 am Eucharist
- 16th 7.30 pm Men's Beer Ministry at QE Pub
- 17th 1.30 pm Meditation Group

19th 2nd SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

- 8.00 am Eucharist
- 10.00 am Sung Eucharist with Sunday School
- 21st 2.15 pm Hymn Service at Cherry Hinton Care Home
- 22nd 10.15 am Eucharist
- 24th 1.30 pm Meditation Group
- 25th 10.00 am Bring & Buy Coffee Morning

26th 3rd SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

- 8.00 am Eucharist
- 10.00 am Sung Eucharist with Sunday School
- 29th 10.15 am Eucharist
- 31st 1.30 pm Meditation Group