

St. Margaret's Church News

Christmas 2018



Ifield Street, Crawley, RH11 0NN

Simon says...



I visited an elderly, housebound lady the other day and we started to talk about plans for Christmas. When I asked her what she would be doing on Christmas Day, she said she'd be at home alone. That statement in itself made me feel quite sad and should be a spur to us as a church and a society to think more carefully about how we engage with the epidemic of loneliness that afflicts our society. However, what she said next made me feel even sadder. She said that being at home alone didn't really matter, because Christmas was for children and young families.

The Christmas we see advertised on our TV screens might be for the young, but what Christmas is really about is for everyone. It's about the God who loved us so much that he took the risk of coming to be one of us so that we might better see and understand what he was like and how he wanted us to be – a light in the darkness. Most of all he wanted us to know that however difficult, painful, frightening and lonely life might become, he would never abandon us – ever – not even after death.

Now that's something really worth celebrating this Christmas; however young or old we might be.

Simon Newham, Rector

What I love about Christmas is midnight mass, time with family, films and Christmas pudding. *Graham Plunkett.*

Christmas at St. Margaret's

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| 9th - 11am | Toy Service Plus (please bring a new toy, a gift for a teenager, or toiletries for an adult - to be donated to Family Support Work). |
| 15th - 9am-6pm | Nativity Festival |
| 16th - 6.30pm | ReFresh Christmas Special |
| 18th - 7.30 pm | Carols at The Plough |
| 20th - 2pm | Alzheimer's Society Carol Service |
| 23rd - 6pm | Christmas Carol Service |
| 24th - 4pm | Crib Service |
| 24th - 11.15pm | Midnight Service |
| 25th - 10am | Christmas Day Family Service |



What I love about Christmas is sharing and caring, love and laughter, children giggling about silly jokes and the smiles on everyone's faces. *Ann Utting*

www.ifieldparish.org



What I love about Christmas is time with my family, excited children, midnight mass and snoozing in my chair after Christmas lunch. *Susan Maries*

From the Editor...

If you watch all the big retailers' Christmas TV adverts, as I've done so that you don't have to, you could be duped into thinking the warm and fuzzy feelings result because they have tapped into the true spirit of Christmas. But what are they really saying? Christmas is about getting what you want? What you need? Christmas is about giving your loved ones what they want? What they should have? Christmas is about buying stuff and consuming stuff and feeling good about it? Oh, and Christmas is about buying your child a musical instrument and hoping they will one day grow up to be a huge star who can buy you anything you want when they're rich and famous? Really? Is the true meaning of Christmas to get yourself down to the shops and do your bit for our ailing high streets by spending your cash on the things the retailers want you to buy?

Hmmm.... sounds a lot like every other day of the year then.

The retailers might try to convince us otherwise, but Christmas is nothing to do with shopping. It's about Jesus. You won't find much about Jesus in County Mall, but there's plenty going on in and around St. Margaret's. Come and see what's on offer and step into Christmas with us. You're invited!

Ian Edgson



What I love about Christmas is the double celebration – it's our daughter's birthday too. *Claire Burrage-Edwards*

Bridgeham Clinic News from Jo Strutt

Are you struggling with ideas of what to buy your family and friends? Perhaps we can help by suggesting a Bridgeham gift voucher - the gift of wellbeing. We can do a voucher for any price which can be used for something specific or can be put towards any treatment or service offered at Bridgeham. Perhaps a massage or a Pilates 1:1. For someone in your life who already enjoys the benefit of Pilates, how about a foam roller, a set of spikey balls, or a combination pack? We can even advise on how to wrap them!

Bridgeham Clinic Ltd: ☎ 01293 542245 ✉

info@bridgehamclinic.com www.bridgehamclinic.com



What I love about Christmas is the wonderful feeling of expectation that Christmas Eve brings, crib service, carols from Kings and gathering my family together. *Kim Cheesman*

Happy Christmas from Martin Stone and Topsy Turvy



Cut & Style	£10.00
Blow Dry/ Set	£5.00
Tint	£20.00
Perms	£20.00
Full Head Highlights	£35.00
Half Head Highlights	£25.00
Gents Cuts	£5.00

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(Monday & Tuesday only)
Call Topsy Turvy: (01293) 525500

What I love about Christmas is our annual ritual of having the travelling crib for the night. Watching the tree get lit up in church (after doing a range of animal noises at Simon's prompts!) and then



family time, pressies and a lovely roast. Christmas carols and cheesy Christmas movies. *Claire Roadley*

Harvest at St. Margaret's



Joseph's Story

I'm one of the most famous names in the Bible. One of the most famous names in history. Who am I? Joseph is my name. Husband of Mary. Father of Jesus. I'm right at the heart of the greatest story ever told, yet no one knows what I thought about it. Why's that? Well, I'm the strong silent type. I don't speak much. In fact, if you study the Bible carefully, you'll discover I don't get to say a single recorded word. Zero. Zilch. Nada. Stum.

If you want to know what I thought, you'll need to pay attention to what I did. My actions speak for me. I'm a man of actions, not words.

When I got engaged to Mary, no one knows how old I was. Some people assume I was older than her; some reckon I had been married before. Some people think I already had kids. There's no evidence for any of that. People just guess. I could have been younger than Mary, for all they know. Can you prove otherwise?

And people have speculated that I didn't know Mary that well, if at all, before we got engaged. Yet maybe we went to school together. Perhaps we had known each other all our lives. Who can say? Not me, of course. I don't say anything. Check your Bible. I'm always speechless.

It's true that Mary and I weren't sleeping together before we got married. Well, you didn't in those days. Or did you? Actually, some people did. The Bible is full of it; if you know where to look.

I've heard the theory that it was I who got Mary pregnant, so we invented the whole virgin birth thing to spare our blushes. Sounds pretty far-fetched, don't you think?

Believe me, I had a big shock when she told me she was pregnant. I knew it wasn't my child. I didn't sleep the night she told me her virgin birth story. How could I marry her, if she was carrying another man's child? Our village was very small. Everyone knew everyone and knew everyone else's business. I didn't really know what to do, to be honest. What would people think? So, as usual, I kept my mouth shut and tried to work it out.

I thought I would ask Mary to quietly break off the engagement with no fuss. I wasn't looking to humiliate her, or me. But then I had a dream, where an angel came and pointed out to me the scriptures which had predicted a virgin would give birth to a son, and the angel told me not to be afraid, because this was the miracle the prophets had been talking about. Imagine! And suddenly I wasn't afraid. I didn't say anything, of course, but I acted. I'm a man of action. I married Mary. We had the baby. My son.

I had another dream, after Herod died. Another angel came and told me to take Mary and Jesus from Israel and into Egypt. Guess what? I did that too. You can trust me to act when I'm asked to by God. I'm a doer. I do what's right.

I did speak out loud sometimes, obviously, but only off the record. Who do you think brought up Jesus to know right from wrong? To be honest and straight with people? To be dependable?

Jesus spoke a lot, of course; and much of what he said got written down. But I'll tell you something; he learned how to act and how to behave and how to treat people from me. I taught him all I knew.

The last time I'm mentioned in the Bible is when Jesus was 12. We'd returned to Jerusalem for Passover, as we used to do every year. That was the time we lost Jesus in the crowd. Turned out he was asking the Rabbis questions and talking to people about God. He was starting to lose me by then; he was so much cleverer than me at interpreting and understanding those old Bible passages. Much more vocal too.

What happened to me after that? No one knows. I wasn't at the wedding in Cana when Jesus started his miracles. You'll have to assume I was dead by then. But how did I die? That's another mystery. As I said, I'm very famous and very mysterious. What happened to me is anyone's guess.

Who goes to a church like this?

Trevor Strutt...

How long have you been at St. Margaret's? **Since 2005**

Who is your favourite fictional hero? **Dangermouse always makes me chuckle.**

Who are your real-life heroes? **Jesus and his brave apostles.**

What is your greatest fear? **Not being loved by my loved ones**

What trait do you most dislike in others? **Dishonesty**

On what occasions do you lie? **I never lie. I hate it.**

Have you ever stolen anything? **Jo's heart. And I'm not giving it back.**

What is your motto? **Fall down seven times. Get up eight.**

What's your favourite song? **"Bring me sunshine" - Morecambe and Wise.**

If you could have one superpower, which would you choose? **Healing**

What is your favourite quote? **"If you've got a short memory, you'd better have long legs" – My Grandad (whilst standing at the top of the stairs trying to remember what he went up there for)**

What did you do growing up that got you into trouble? **Ha-Ha! Too many to mention. Thank the Lord I was blessed with the most fantastic parents who have a great sense of humour and hearts full of love.**

Who did you have on your wall as a child? **As a teenager, life size posters of Linda Lusardi and Suzannah Mizzi!**

When and where were you the happiest? **05/06/2004. Sanderstead. The day I was married to Jo.**

Which talent do you wish you had? **To sing without seeing my beautiful wife's face recoil and distort in horror**

What was the last movie, TV show or book that made you cry? **Jo and I cried laughing at 'I'm a Celebrity, Get Me Out of Here' when Rita trumped on camera and Jack thought a "branch had fallen out of a tree"; but the Invictus Games had me wobbling my bottom lip from start to finish. Those guys and gals are so amazingly strong inside.**

What do you value in your friends? **The ability to kick back in, right where you left off, whatever time has gone by**

What is your favourite activity? **This summer I've rekindled my enjoyment with archery. I do it outdoors mostly**

If you could learn to do anything, what would it be? **Teach people how to accept one another for who they are and love them in spite of this!**

Have you ever had something happen to you that you thought was bad but it turned out to be for the best? **Finding out my first wife was having affairs behind my back. She's happier now, and so am I.**

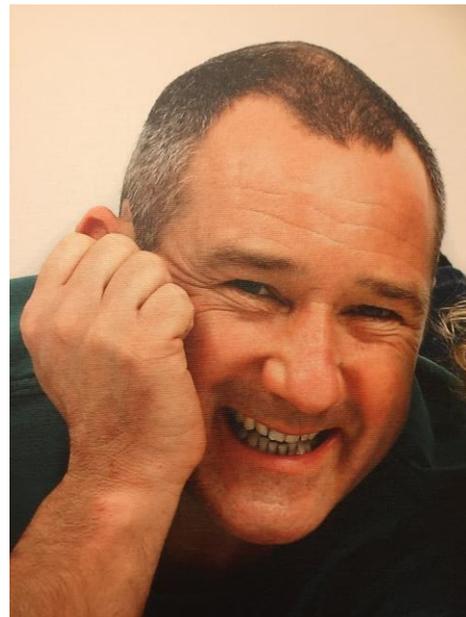
What do you consider to be the most overrated virtue? **Pride. There's always someone who can do it bigger and better just around the corner.**

What's the hardest thing you've ever done? **Full throttle. Pulled back the joystick on an aircraft, and then put the thing safely back down on the ground. On my own.**

What experience made you a stronger person? **Learning to forgive. You only hurt yourself if you hang on.**

If you were immortal for a day, what would you do? **Don one of those winged flying suits and fly down a mountain at high speed screaming "yeeeeee-hah!" all the way down**
What is something you learned recently? **We're not all cut of the same cloth. And that's ok.**

If you knew the world was ending soon, what would you do differently? **Enjoy using the phrase "sod it" more often**



**9AM-11AM FREE
FAMILY NATIVITY FUN
MORNING**

**11AM SHORT
NATIVITY SERVICE**

**12.30PM-5.30PM
OPEN AFTERNOON TO
COME AND VIEW ALL
THE NATIVITES**

**5.30PM SHORT
SERVICE WITH
CAROLS, MULLED
WINE AND MINCE
PIES**

How would you like to spend eternity? **In Heaven. With loved ones. Having amazing chats with God about the true workings of the human body. And the universe. And everything.**

What do you want for Christmas? **Sounds cheesy, but honestly: Joy and happiness for all. God bless us. Happy Christmas!**