



**Christ Church News (40)**  
*by and for the Christ Church Family*  
 6<sup>th</sup> December 2020



**Musings from the Manse**

Dear Friends,

Every year it's the same – I sit down to write my Christmas Cards and have an argument with myself about who I should post a card to, who needs to come off the list, who can I send an E-Card to and save postage and trees; do I send everyone the same card and, if so, is my choice of card appropriate for everyone?! I wonder if you do the same?! Being a Minister, and moving around a lot, means that you get to know lots of people who you would like to remain in contact with. If I were to do this faithfully, it would cost me an arm and a leg in postage and cards and, sadly, much more time than I have. To further complicate things, Colin and I are now happily part of a new neighbourhood/church(es)/area etc – so do I add more to my list of recipients or do I find another solution?



Well - this Newsletter, edited and faithfully distributed by Mary Quiney, has become my solution – because I wanted to be able to tell you all – whether at Christ Church or at Paghams URC (yes, it is sent to Penny Thomas, Paghams Church Secretary, for distribution amongst their congregation) – that, regardless of how many times I've met you, or not at all as yet, how well I know you or not, Christmas Greetings are coming to you from both Colin and myself with the help of a poem written by Mark Greene (L.I.C.C.), called...

**'Christmas Promise'**

This baby, this God, my God, Mary's son,  
 Did not come as an artist's impression,  
 Oil or canvas, tempera on wood,  
 But from the womb: bone, brain, heart, blood.  
 Came to show that this life,  
 Come what may, come what came to him...

A country life: brothers, sisters, festivals, friends,  
 Hands calloused working wood and stone; and then  
 Temptation, betrayal, slander, shame,  
 Whip, nail, spittle, pain,  
 All evil's weight, and breath-taking death...

This life, my life, any life could, with him, be full, rich free,  
 Come what comes, as he intended it to be.  
 Christmas is a promise,  
 The divine guarantee of the possibility:  
 God with us day by day in our humanity,  
 Heaven-scented with the pledge of eternity.

May Christ be close to you this Christmas and throughout the coming year –  
 and, however we celebrate the birth of God's Son in 2020, a year like no other,  
 be assured that love and blessings come from our house to yours, in Jesus' name.

Yours in Christ, Helen <><





**Word for Today** Mark 1: 1-8



## **Meditation of John the Baptist**

You've heard of the Romans I suppose? - a decadent lot, to put it mildly; but I'll say this for them: they know how to build roads! There are dozens everywhere - even out here in the wilderness - running straight and true, mile after mile, and what a difference they've made; journeys that once took a week now being a matter of days. Not that Rome cares about us, of course. They're thinking only of their armies. One sniff of trouble - let alone rebellion - and they can be down on us now like a ton of bricks - legions hurried in from across the world.

But you've got to admire their foresight - how they're prepared, it seems, for anything. I'm following their example, in a sense, creating a road of a different sort into the wilderness of human lives; for my task is to prepare the way of the Lord - to make straight a path for his coming.

He'll be here soon, you see - the day almost upon us; but will you be ready to receive him - ready to hear his voice and meet his gaze, to answer when he calls? Oh, you may think so, but don't be fooled, because most of those who've come out to me here in the wilderness aren't even close!

So, take heed, listen to my words, and be prepared; so that, whenever he comes, he may find the road clear - a highway into your heart.

## **Prayer**

Lord Jesus Christ,

prepare a way in our hearts so that you may more fully enter in.

Break down the barriers of doubt and disbelief that keep us from you -

the faults and failings that deny your love and obstruct your purpose.

Fill us with your love, redeem us by your grace and renew us by your power.

Make your path straight within us, so that, consecrated to your service,

we, in turn, may help to prepare your way in the lives of others.

Amen

*(Adapted from 'A Most Amazing Man' by Nick Fawcett)*

## **We are back in the building!**

As from the 6<sup>th</sup> December, Christ Church will be able to meet once again for services in church. Whilst the recorded and Zoom services have been there to fill the gap - (and my grateful thanks go to all those who have made this possible) - we are now reverting to the system used pre-lockdown. This means that you will need to book your place\* each Sunday, once again - including Christmas Day - but it is hoped that a recording of the service will also be available to send out post Sunday morning.

These recordings remain a work in progress as we endeavour to upgrade the system we are using; so please bear with the Trustees and Elders as Richard Spong sources and installs new equipment - and we learn how to use it!! The means by which the recording is then sent out to you can be a long and difficult process, which needs the knowhow of one or more people to enable this - and again, my thanks go out to Anna Vowles and others who have made this possible.

2020 will be for ever the year when we all learnt new technological skills we didn't think we needed!!

\*To book a place(s) at a service - email [chichristchurch@gmail.com](mailto:chichristchurch@gmail.com) (preferred) or phone [01243 531594](tel:01243531594) **by 6 pm on Sunday, the week BEFORE the service you wish to attend.**

Please state the names of all the people you wish to book for and say whether or not you are all in a household or 'bubble'.

Also, please mention any special requirements as to where you need to sit.

