

Services held every
Sunday morning
10:30 am

Volume 16 Issue 9 December 2020

Next issue: First Sunday January 2020

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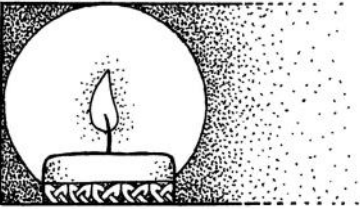


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The Anglican Chaplaincy of Twente

DIOCESE IN EUROPE
THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND





December
2020





Dear Friends,

It is amazing to me, at the end of what has been for many a predominantly disjointed, politically fractious and 'lockdown' year, it has seemingly passed with such obscene haste. So, here we are, in the blink of an eye, at the beginning of a new liturgical Church year, in the season of Advent, with Christmas on its heels. Even though the time has flown for many, for them, and for those whose time has hung like a motionless pendulum, lockdown has brought frustration, anxiety, loneliness, fear, loss of independence, deep mental paralysis and real social and economic panic.

Against this backdrop, however, I rejoice that we might find a shared hope in this special season since, although a time of singular significance for Christians, it is nevertheless meaningful and beloved by so many people, even far beyond the fringes of the Christian Church. In my own experience, I have celebrated at a deep level, all the finest of human emotions of warmth, Joy, and authentic connection with communities, brought together by nothing other than a soul stirring mystical apprehension of 'being' greater than one's own personal ego. This, I am both privileged and humbled to have shared with, among others, agnostics, atheists, humanists, and many who actively or loosely belong to other faith groups, and the ideologically disinterested or conflicted. It is as if the deep and profound message of creative love is heard, even when many souls cannot discern from whence this profound message might be spoken.

I, like many of you, my brothers and sisters of St Mary's, am fortunate to have a life sustaining and sure faith, due in large part, I think, to, perhaps, the accident of my social and cultural heritage. Providence, at least for me, has encouraged this deep faith, in which is a certainty of

the expansive effect of the Christmas message, and this, within the wider context of the full Gospel narrative, with its compelling climax of Holy Week and Easter.

I am reminded of the breadth of the Christmas message of comfort and universal hope in the inspirational and much-loved poem, "I heard the bells on Christmas Day". It was written in 1863 by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, who could have been forgiven for turning his back on such a message of Christmas joy and hope. In 1861, after a deeply loving and truly romantic marriage, his wife, Frances, died in a tragic and horrifying domestic accident during which, while attempting to rescue her, he was engulfed by flames, and was himself severely burned. Two years later, as the American civil war raged, their son, Charley, influenced by Longfellow's staunch anti-slavery sentiment, left home to fight. Misfortune struck Charley twice within the year: he suffered a potentially mortal fever and, after his recovery, was later shot during battle. Depressed by these personal trials added to his deep sorrow at the divisions within the nation he loved, Longfellow felt dejected and remorselessly forlorn. Then, in the saddest of moments, he heard the sound of the church bells. As he listened, for him a Christmas promise re-emerged in his heart, of renewed peace for his troubled nation.

Do take a look at this wonderfully inspiring poem, the last two verses of which, here, give you the flavour of the powerfully rejuvenated hope recaptured in the faith of Longfellow.

And in despair I bowed my head;
"There is no peace on earth," I said;
"For hate is strong,
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The Wrong shall fail,
The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will to men."

I believe that only by expressing hope, universally, with all people, will there be the possibility of fulfilment of hope in truly collective peace and love among all.

God bless you with peace in your hearts this Christmas and always.

Love, Brian.

St Mary's Chapel News



Christmas Services 2020

Our Festival Services of Lessons and Carols will be on December 13 at 16:30 and 19:00. The Christmas Eucharist services will be on December 24 at 17:00 and 20:00 hours. We would love you to join us, but please do make your reservations with Jeanet, Due to the Covid crises we can only have 30 people at each service.

Covid

This year, President Trump got the full 2020 experience! He caught Covid, lost his job, and will soon be evicted from his house.

Next Christmas

The grandson had just taken a photograph of his grandmother who'd come to stay for Christmas and her 89th birthday. 'Grannie, I sure hope I'm around next year to photograph you on your 90th birthday,' he said tactfully.

'Why not?' his grandmother shrugged. 'You look healthy enough.'

Friction at Christmas

This Christmas, when your family gets together, remember: a certain friction between the generations is inevitable. After all, the young and the old have all the answers and those in between are stuck with all the questions.

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Postage Stamps

Theda is collecting used postage stamps for a Charity fund. Can everyone carefully remove the postage stamps, and the special Christmas Stamps, from their mail this month? Either place the stamps in the stamp box in the Hut, or give them to Theda. Your Christmas mail will thus not only keep you in touch with loved ones, it will also help those in need.

Videos of the services

Thank you so much to Lub Gringhuis who does an excellent job each week in making the video recordings of the services. They are much appreciated, especially by those who are not able to attend the services in person. Previous services, going back to March this year, are still available to watch via the Website page.

A Word from Wales

Last year, we celebrated our last Dutch Christmas in Weldam. We were sad about leaving all the wonderful people we had come to know at St Mary's over the 23 years we spent in the Netherlands. However, there was also much to look forward to.

I love Cathedral services accompanied with the rich majesty of a full choir. Feeling the pew vibrate as the organist pulls out all the stops and lets a pipe organ, about the size of a small house, thunder out Christmas Carols such as 'O Come all you Faithful'. You get the picture?

We never dreamt that our first Christmas in Wales would be like this one is going to be. Chester Cathedral is 10 kilometres south, and it is closed. St Asaph Cathedral is 30 kilometres north, and it too is closed.

Disappointed we may be that Christmas will not be as we imagined, yet grateful that we have so much to rejoice about here. Also, somewhat mystified about some

peoples' priorities. Theatres and cinemas are closed. This is accepted, as necessary. The huge number of National Trust properties are closed. Well, there is a pandemic after all. Zoos and Safari Parks are struggling as they have been forced to close. This is equally accepted as a great shame, but necessary.

At a time of great fear and loneliness, all places of worship, Christian churches, Jewish Synagogues, Islamic Mosques and Hindu Temples are closed. A shame, but after all there is a pandemic.

But when it was announced that pubs would have to close at 10pm rather than 11pm, there were great howls of fury. The government was now in danger of violating human rights!!!

Wishing all our readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, or Nadolig llawen a blwyddyn newydd dda.



Magazine Payments

St. Mary's Magazine plays a valuable role in helping to keep the congregation informed on what is going on in their church and the chapel community. If you wish to receive a printed copy of the magazine, issued ten times a year, an annual donation of €15 will help to cover printing costs. If you cannot pick up your copy in the chapel and want to have it posted to you, we need to ask for an additional donation of €20 to cover postage.

Last year only two thirds of the magazine costs came from donations, the balance came from chapel funds. It would help the survival of the magazine if all costs were covered by voluntary donations. Thank you.

Intercessions

If you wish to have someone included in the intercessions, or who is in need of a pastoral visit, please contact one of the Churchwardens or the Chaplain, before the Service. Alternatively, if you want to have someone included in the intercessions you could contact the Intercessor via the Prayer Request Tool on the Chapel Website. The Chaplain, the Wardens and the Intercessor will simultaneously receive your message via this tool. The link below will take you directly to the Prayer Request.

<http://anglicanchurchtwente.com/home/service%20%26%20readings/prayers%20requests.html>

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Drive

He was a careful driver during the Christmas period. At the railway crossing he stopped, looked and listened. All he heard was the sound of the car behind him, smashing into his boot.

Present

First man: 'My wife doesn't know what she wants for Christmas.'
Second man: 'You're lucky. Mine does.'

Little

"I didn't look much - I've only got little eyes!"

7 year-old, about to be scolded for peeking at her Christmas presents

Christmas cake

Every Christmas, composer Giacomo Puccini would have a cake baked for each of his friends. One year, having quarrelled with Arturo Toscanini just before Christmas, he tried to cancel the order for the conductor's cake. But it was too late, as the cake had already been dispatched.

The following day, Toscanini received a

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telegram from Puccini: "Cake sent by mistake."

He replied by return: "Cake eaten by mistake."

Angels?

Two daughters had been given parts in a Christmas pageant at their Church.

At dinner that night, they got into an argument as to who had the most important role.

Finally, the 14 year-old said to her 8 year-old younger sister, 'Well, you just ask Mum. She'll tell you it's much harder to be a virgin than it is to be an angel.'

Attention

With a number of relatives visiting, I was struggling to get my wife's attention. So, I simply sat down and looked comfortable. That did the trick.

Angels on high

The young minister was tense as he announced a Christmas carol for his first live-streamed church

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St James the Least of All

On the best ways for a vicar to disrupt Christmas

My dear Nephew Darren

I am sorry I was not alive during that wonderful four-year period when Oliver Cromwell abolished Christmas; no Christmas parties, no carol services, no cards to send and no frantic last-minute shopping. That man was a hero.



Planning for Christmas at St James' normally starts on 2nd January. By Easter, the flowers for church have been carefully chosen to be colour coordinated, and the seating plans and table decorations for the Christmas party have been allocated (with nominated reserves in case someone should inconveniently die in the intervening eight months). Long before Summer is over, the tree lights have been tested, music for the 9 Lessons and Carols Service has been chosen and the service sheets printed. Way before the dark nights set in, car parking attendants will have been found, those who are to light all the candles will have been rehearsed to perfection, and the brass lectern has had its annual polish.

We do not do spontaneity at St James the Least of All. If ever there was a service when time for something unexpected had to be allowed, its place would be announced in the order of service, how long the unexpected thing would happen for would have been decided by a committee, and who was to be spontaneous would have been allocated on a rota.

But the one person none of these well-meaning, efficient, committed organisers can control is the Rector. You could call it a staff perk.

Carols will (accidentally, of course) be announced in the wrong order; if verse 3 was to be omitted, I announce it will be verse 4. This keeps the organist on his toes while the choir hovers on the point of a collective nervous breakdown. At the Christmas supper, my introductory welcome speech and extensive grace make those in the kitchen wonder if the vegetables being boiled should better be served as thick soup.

I offer the helpful suggestion that the tree, having been installed and decorated in the chancel, may perhaps look

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better in the sanctuary and I turn all the heating off throughout the season, explaining that it will help the flowers to last. All Services will start five minutes early (was my watch rather fast?) so I can look disapprovingly at those still coming in while we are singing the first carol and making it clear that I think they had spent too long in the pub next door.

And so we all reach Christmas morning, with 12 months of planning having gone yet again slightly awry, with parishioners exhausted and I exhilarated at the chaos that has been created with such ease. Mr Cromwell, your spirit lives on.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace



Christmas 2020

If Christmas is hard,
If you've lost someone dear,
Just look in your heart,
And you'll know they still here

The star in the sky,
The light falling snow,
The robin outside,
It seems like they know.

If this is a time.
When you're struggling through,
Just do what you can,
For what matters, is you.

There's no need to be merry,
There's no need to be bright,
Just do what you can,
It will all be alright.

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service. 'Our next hymn,' he said, 'is "Angels We Have Heard Get High".'

Miscellaneous observations during the Christmas season...

Putting on weight is the penalty for exceeding the feed limit.

Christmas: The time when everyone gets Santamental.

People say it's the thought that counts, not the gift, but couldn't people think a little bigger?

Christmas is the season when your neighbour keeps you awake playing 'Silent Night'.

You might as well do your Christmas hinting early this year.

Father to three-year old: "No, a reindeer is not a horse with TV antenna."

Every year, Christmas becomes less a birthday and more a Clearance Sale.

Christmas is in my heart 12 months a year, and thanks to credit cards, it's on

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Oops

The young couple invited their minister for Sunday dinner. While they were in the kitchen preparing the meal, the minister asked their son what they were having. "Goat," the little boy replied. "Goat?" replied the startled man of the cloth, "Are you sure about that?" "Yep," said the youngster. "I heard Dad say to Mum 'Might as well have the old goat for dinner today as any other day.'

Freckles

An elderly woman and her little grandson, whose face was sprinkled with bright freckles, spent the day at the zoo. Lots of children were waiting in line to get their cheeks painted by a local artist who was decorating them with tiger paws. "You've got so many freckles, there's no place to paint!" a girl

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Report of the Synodical gathering of the Archdeaconry of North-West Europe, - October 8th-10th, 2020 Part 1 of 3

How different it all was this year! From 2013 onwards the annual Synod of the Archdeaconry of North-West Europe has been held in the 'Oude Abdij' in Drongen, originally owned by the Jesuit Order, near Ghent. At the beginning of October, Synod members like to flock towards the venerable old building. They are looking forward to hearing the address of the Bishop and listen to interesting and stimulating talks, which are often interactive. We love to wander around in the spacious gardens and have stimulating conversations between sessions. Alas, this year this it was not to be.... And as Archdeacon Paul pointed out in the invitation to Synod in this year, in which Covid-19 spread globally: we'll miss bumping into old friends and meeting new ones, speeding through the spacious, resounding corridors to be in time for Morning Prayer. In short, we'll miss *being there*.

Instead, we met digitally through Zoom, seventy-odd synod members. As we could not physically meet, the event was called a 'Synodical Gathering' rather than a Synod, because no motions could be tabled, elections held, or votes taken. It was quite an experience to see so many well-known faces on screen. And baffling to see other ones you never met in person! But realizing this may be part of our future, we all tried to make the best of it. And thanks to the excellent organization digitally, it all worked out very well.

The sessions were divided over three days, Thursday 8th October from 19.30 hrs. to 21.00 hrs. Friday 9th from 16.00 hrs. to 21.00 hrs. and Saturday 10th from 9.00 hrs. to 13.00 hrs., with breaks in-between.

On Thursday, our Archdeacon Paul Vrolijk welcomed everybody and opened with prayer. He provided news from the separate chaplaincies in the Benelux over the past year, Such as the ordination of three deacons and one priest to serve as curates, and the arrival of new chaplains and the imminent departure or retirement of others (among whom our chaplain Brian Rodford). At the very end of his address, he announced that he would step down as Archdeacon. This news hit us like a bomb; this was entirely unexpected. Paul has been in office for four years. Before we started to get worried, he assured us that he is in excellent health. But in his experience, he found that the workload as Archdeacon was so heavy that he was only able to work two days a week for Holy Trinity in Brussels as Senior Chaplain. Therefore, he decided to resume his fulltime office as Senior Chaplain to be able to give Holy Trinity his undivided attention. Sam van Leer, our former chaplain in St. Mary's, at present associate Chaplain to Holy Trinity Utrecht, now working at Grace Church, Groningen, will replace Paul as Acting Archdeacon for six months until a new

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fulltime Archdeacon can be appointed.

The Archdeaconry Finances were dealt with immediately after, not in a meeting on Saturday, as usual. The Treasurer, David Sayers did an excellent job. The only special issues to be mentioned here are that in the past year, travelling costs were much lower than usual - due to Covid-19. Also, that more funds are needed for CIO (Interkerkelijk Contact in Overheidszaken) because of changes in Dutch Law concerning privacy, safeguarding and public health - the latter also because of Covid-19. Support of the project in Luweero (Uganda) will be continued.

Compline followed, led by Matt Thijs, recently ordained deacon, who is curate in Voorschoten.

©Simone Yallop, Licensed Lay Reader & Archdeaconry Representative

Shoebox Project 2020 - Actie Schoenendoos

Like years in the past, we also did take part in the Shoebox Project (Actie Schoenendoos). This little boy represents one of the numerous children who will receive a shoebox filled with great presents.

That lovely Barbie doll, a cool car or funny teddy bear..... It will make a child in Lesvos smile. The pens and notebooks that you personally picked helps a boy or girl in Sierra Leone to go back to school. Your carefully assembled shoebox is such a special gift. These kids will treat it as treasure.

Your box did travel to the nearest collection station. From there it went to a processing centre. This is a crucial place, for here the content of the boxes are checked and complemented if necessary. A Bible booklet is added to the boxes for those countries that allow them. Then it is off for the long journey to one of the countries that have been

selected for this year's project.

Despite the minimal attendance in our Chapel due to the COVID-19 restrictions, we still managed to fill fifteen shoeboxes. A big thank you to all who took part in this project.

Lub Gringhuis



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in the line said to the little fella.

Embarrassed, the little boy dropped his head. His grandmother knelt next to him. "I love your freckles.

When I was a little girl, I always wanted freckles," she said, while tracing her finger across the child's Freckles are beautiful."

The boy looked up, "Really?"

"Of course," said the grandmother. "Why just name me one thing that's prettier than freckles."

The little boy thought for a moment, peered intensely into his grandma's face, and softly whispered, "Wrinkles."

Stronger

Statistics show that we're getting stronger. 50 years ago, you needed an estate car to hold €100 worth of Christmas presents. 30 years ago, it took two people to carry €40 worth of groceries.

Now a five-year-old can do it.

Forthcoming Services

December 6 2020

10:30 Eucharist

Advent 2

Celebrant and Preacher

Canon Brian Rodford

Duty Warden
Klaas Prins

Intercessor:
Klaas Prins

There will be no
sung hymns

Sidesperson/Reader

Readings

Erick Wanjala

2. Peter 3. 8-15a

Gospel

Mark 1. 1-8

December 13 2020

Lessons and Carols

Advent 3

Celebrant and Preacher

Canon Brian Rodford

Duty Warden
Jeanet Luiten

Intercessor:
Joyce Wigboldus

There will be no
sung hymns

Sidesperson/Reader

Readings

T.B.A.

T.B.A.

December 20 2020

10:30 Eucharist

Advent 4

Celebrant and Preacher

Canon Brian Rodford

Duty Warden
Klaas Prins

Intercessor:
Maureen Underwood

There will be no
sung hymns

Sidesperson/Reader

Readings

Jan de Beij

Romans 16. 25-end

Gospel

Luke 1. 26-38

Forthcoming Services

December 24 2020

17:00 and 20:00

First Eucharist of Christmas

Celebrant and Preacher

Canon Brian Rodford

Duty Warden
Jeanet Luiten

Intercessor:
Simone Yallop

There will be no sung
hymns

Sidesperson/Reader

Readings

Patrick Saridjan

Isaiah 9. 2-7

Gospel

Luke 2, 15-21

December 27 2020

10:30 Eucharist

Advent 1

Officiant ant and Preacher

Canon Brian Rodford

Duty Warden:
Klaas Prins

Intercessor
Jeanet Luiten

There will be
no sung hymns

Sidesperson/Reader

Readings

Victor Pirenne

1 John 1, 1-end

Gospel

John 21, 19b -end

Last service and goodbye to

Our Chaplain, The Revd. Canon Brian Rodford



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my Visa card statement 12 months a year as well.

Some of these new toys are so creative and inventive. This year they have a Neurotic Doll. It's wound up already.

Christmas is a time when people get emotional over family ties, particularly if they have to wear one.

New Year's Eve is coming soon...

The inventor of the bagpipes was inspired when he saw a man carrying an indignant asthmatic pig under his arm. Unfortunately, the man-made sound never equalled the purity of the sound achieved by the pig. -

Alfred Hitchcock.

Bring not a bagpipe to a man in trouble. -
Jonathan Swift.

Editor: And finally - a true

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The English Camp

Last year I had a phone call from a lady in Hengelo called Christina de Vos. She wanted to talk to someone from the 'English Church' about a photograph that she has of her father, during the First World War, with some British servicemen in Deventer. Would we be able to help find out more about this? I offered to visit and look at the photo. A few weeks ago, I received another call. In the meantime, Christina de Vos had been in contact with Menno Wielinga, who wrote a book called *Het Engelse Kamp (The English Camp) Groningen 1914 - 1918*. The book was about the history of 1500 British servicemen during the First World War.



The book explains how these British servicemen came to be in the Netherlands, which during the First World War, was a neutral country. The First World War began in August 1914. Germany was at war with France, the United Kingdom and Russia. When Germany invaded Belgium, to get to France, there was heavy fighting. The Belgian army retreated to the city of Antwerp. Winston Churchill, as First Lord of the Admiralty, went to Belgium to convince the Belgians to hold on as long as possible. However, there were no British or French troops available to help, so Churchill called in two reserve brigades. These included young members of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (RNVR) and new volunteers. They had little training and were unprepared for action in the infantry. It was not possible to prevent the fall of Antwerp. In a chaotic withdrawal of troops, 1500 men of the first Royal Naval Brigade had their return route cut off and found themselves having to divert to the neutral Netherlands. They were disarmed and, under international law, were interned in a guarded camp to prevent them returning to the war.

These men, of the Hawke, Benbow and Collingwood battalions, were eventually interned in a camp in Groningen, *Het Engelse Kamp*. It was a village of wooden buildings that for the interns, with their naval background and uniforms, came to be known as HMS Timbertown.

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Life in the camp was run on military lines with daily route marches, but also many other activities, studies and sports were organised. There was a recreation hall for cultural activities. Church services were also held there. For the Anglicans, a minister was brought in from the Mission to Seafarers.

Within the camp, there was a group that gave cabaret performances. They did this firstly just for the interns at an entertainment evening. But, they were so good that they were invited to perform in the theatre in Groningen and later toured theatres throughout the Netherlands. They brought the Music Hall style, then unknown in the Netherlands. They were called the Timbertown Follies. Accompanying the book is a DVD about them. It tells that during the war, they performed more than 300 times.



Christina de Vos told me that she thought this photo of her father, wearing a Royal Navy uniform, must have been taken when the Timbertown Follies performed in Deventer. Her father, Jan de Vos (born in 1894) was not in the British Royal Navy but was in the Royal Netherlands Army, and stationed in Deventer. Perhaps they swapped uniforms for the photograph? Jan de Vos is the fourth from left in the picture. The men, second and third from left, have RNVR (Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve) on their headdress. The man on the far left is in the same uniform used by the Dutch guards at the English Camp. Presumably, guards went with Timbertown Follies on their theatre tours.

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story from one of our editors at the Parish Pump:

We were living in Pusan, Korea and attending services at the local Flying Angel. My wife was typing out a carol service, and when I proof-read it, I found that she had entitled the seventh lesson 'The Shepherds go to the Manager'.

'Well,' I thought. 'In a way, they did!'

More Christmas Humour

Why was the turkey in the pop group?
Because he was the only one with drumsticks!

Why was the snowman looking through the carrots?
He was picking his nose!

What do snowmen wear on their heads?
Ice caps!

What did Adam say the day before Christmas?
It's Christmas, Eve!

Its Christmas

"Why won't Donald Trump be attending midnight mass this year? Fake pews." - Anonymous (probably just as well).

Cryptic

Christmas Card

A man sent his friend a cryptic Christmas card. It said: A B C D E F G H I J K M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z. The recipient puzzled over it for weeks, finally gave up and wrote asking for an explanation. In July he received the explanation on a postcard: "No L.

Didn't You Get My E-Mail?

As a little girl climbed onto Santa's lap, Santa asked the usual, "And what would you like for Christmas?" The child stared at him open mouthed and horrified for a minute, then gasped: "Didn't you get my E-mail?"

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This remarkable photograph has printed on the back the name of the photographer: *Fotografisch Atelier, J.H. Rutgers, Nieuwstraat 26, Deventer*. Beautifully handwritten on the back, and dated 20/11/17, are the words: *Ter Gedachtenis aan de mobilisatie*, together with the names of two people and their addresses in England, one in Whitley Bay, Northumberland, and one in Newcastle on Tyne. They are both addresses that still exist, so perhaps there is an opening there for more information about the story? I am most grateful to Christina de Vos for sharing her story and pictures with me. I do hope that she will be able to find some answers to fill in the gaps. Who knows, perhaps someone reading this will have some clues? I can also thoroughly recommend Menno Wielinga's book, which is a very readable, extremely well documented, piece of historical research.

@Simone Yallop

Postscript: The above article was written in November 2019. It was not published then because Christina de Vos was still in correspondence with Menno Wielinga, the author of *The English Camp*. In his reply to her letter, he explains that the three British sailors were possibly in Deventer because they would have been allowed to work voluntarily outside the English Camp in Groningen. A group of more than 10 would have been guarded by Dutch soldiers. Possibly, Christina's father (with a Dutch army uniform) belonged to such a guard unit. They always got on very well together, hence this special photo as souvenir.



My Corona Feelings

Corona, oh boy, what an awful period! In many ways! For me, Lock Down feels like a vacation. I am up late, and I take my time to have a lazy breakfast. I only do the things I cannot escape to do, like the laundry, washing the dishes, paying my bills with the internet. But for the rest.... it feels like freedom within the walls of my little kingdom.

-I eat, when I am hungry, not on set times.

-I have an enormous pile of books from the library.

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-On the computer are the most beautiful jigsaw puzzle to find and that I do whenever I like to do so.

-I am hanging on the phone for hours calling my family and friends, including the ones I have not seen for ages.

-And in the evening, I watch films and documentaries - to be sure, not the ones about corona - with the dog nice and warm on my lap.

-And in between, I am knitting and embroidering just those items I always wanted to make, and not thinking about how long it will take before it is finished.

-Playing Bach on the piano in the middle of the night.

-Taking lots of time to read my cookbooks to find some dishes I never had time to make.

Yes, this is a great type of vacation.

I have to eat alone.

There is nobody with whom to laugh about stupid things.

There is nobody to agree with about the cold and rain outside. And there is nobody to hug once in a while...!

When will this vacation come to an end????

@Erica Schotman Bonting



The story of Mince Pies

Did you know that mince pies have been traditional English Christmas fare since the Middle Ages, when meat was a key ingredient? The addition of spices, suet and alcohol to meat came about because it was an alternative to salting and smoking in order to preserve the food. Mince pies used to be a different shape - cradle-shaped with a pastry baby Jesus on top.

@ Parish Pump

A Christmas problem.?

"Can I have some of this cheese?"

"No, it's for Christmas"

"Okay, I'll just have a slice of bread"

"That's Christmas bread."

"How about just.... if I boil some rice?"

CHRISTMAS!!!!

December:

- Eat the entire supermarket.

- Fruitlessly search for parking.

- Fill fridge with stuff you are not allowed to touch.

- Wear too many layers in the shopping centre.

- Be constantly flustered.

- Hunt for stamps.

- Pretend to have fun.

Erica Schotman Bonting

True story

The nativity play was going as planned and Joseph and Mary were going from house to house knocking on the doors and asking if there was any room for them. As they continued to get "no room" answers a little voice called from the back "YOU SHOULD HAVE BOOKED!" bringing the house down.

With Christmas in mind...

Believe in God and you'll believe in miracles. Believe in the baby of Bethlehem, and you'll experience one. - Anon

It is no use saying that we are born 2000 years too late to give room to Christ... Christ is always with us, always asking for room in our hearts... And giving shelter or food to anyone who asks for it, or needs it, is giving it to Christ. - Dorothy Day

Human nature is like a stable inhabited by the ox of passion and the ass of prejudice - animals which take up a lot of room and which I suppose most of us are feeding on the quiet. And it is there between them, pushing them out, that Christ must be born, and in their very manger He must be laid. - Evelyn Underhill

Christmas

St Nicholas - a much-loved saint

One account of how Father Christmas began tells of a man named Nicholas who was born in the third century in the Greek village of Patara, on what is today the southern coast of Turkey. His family were both devout and wealthy, and when his parents died in an epidemic, Nicholas decided to use his inheritance to help people. He gave to the needy, the sick, the suffering. He dedicated his whole life to God's service and was made Bishop of Myra while still a young man. As a bishop in later life, he joined other bishops and priests in prison under the emperor Diocletian's fierce persecution of Christians across the Roman Empire.

Finally released, Nicholas was all the more determined to shed abroad the news of God's love. He did so by giving. One story of his generosity explains why we hang Christmas stockings over our mantelpieces today. There was a poor family with three daughters who needed dowries if they were to marry, and not be sold into slavery. Nicholas heard of their plight and tossed three bags of gold into their home through an open window - thus saving the girls from a life of misery.

The bags of gold landed in stockings or shoes left before the fire to dry. Hence the custom of children hanging out stockings - in the hope of attracting presents of their own from St Nicholas - on Christmas Eve. That is why three gold balls, sometimes represented as oranges, are one of the symbols of St Nicholas.

The example of St Nicholas has never been forgotten - in bygone years boys in Germany and Poland would dress up as bishops on 6th December and beg alms for the poor. In the Netherlands and Belgium 'St Nicholas' would arrive on a steamship from Spain to ride a white horse on his gift-giving rounds. To this day, 6th December is still the main day for gift-giving and merry-making in much of Europe. Many people feel that simple gift-giving in early Advent helps preserve a Christmas Day focus on the Christ Child.

Why do we need Advent?

Many people say: "I can understand God, but I can't see where Jesus fits into the picture."

A theologian called Athanasius, Egyptian by birth and Greek by education, gave the answer to your question 1600 years ago. He said: "The only system of thought into which Jesus Christ will fit is the one in which HE is the starting point!"

Once we try to begin with our own human-based attempt at understanding God and the meaning of life - let alone the place that Christ occupies - we'll be like the man who tries to do up

his shirt buttons, *beginning with the wrong button*. He may hope that it will all work out, and that the shirt will eventually fit properly, but it never will.

So, you need to begin with Christ, if you want the picture to make sense. He is right there in the Bible, from the start. All Creation finds both its origin and its fulfilment in Him, its rightful heir (Colossians 1:15-17). You will notice from Colossians 1:17 that, far from Christ fitting into our system, we can only 'fit' - and thus find coherence and meaning - in His... or rather, in HIM.

It is through Christ alone that we can know the face of God, and His salvation in our lives. Jesus is fully God and fully human, Christ - the God-Man - is the perfect mediator. By His saving death He has bridged the gulf between heaven and earth (Philippians 2:5-11).

No one else will do. That was the blazing conviction of those first-century Christians. Beside Christ there was no other name (Acts 4:12). Historically, Christ's name claims supreme recognition in all the areas of life that matter most. It happened in the world of worship - where the Druids, ju-ju men, witch doctors, temple priests and the gigantic gods Mithras, Serapis, Diana, Jupiter and Venus were all swept away.

It also happened in the world of suffering. When we put the leaders of history and of thought together, it is quite clear that none of them suffered as Jesus did. In Him we see God incarnate, living among us, loving, suffering, dying and reclaiming. This fact alone is enough to explain the beginning of hospitals in our world. They were never begun by a state department. They owe their origin to the influence of Christ, and reflect His compassion.

It happened in the world of creativity. Christ has inspired symphonies, paintings, soaring architectures and enduring literature. Take Christ away, and the writings of Shakespeare would be meaningless. Atheism, by its very nature, could never have this impact, for atheism has no wings.

It happened in the world of eternity. The pre-Christian epitaphs say it all: 'I was not, I was born, I lived, I am not, that is all'. 'Guesswork is over all', Xenophanes had written. Into that world exploded the message of Christ, bodily raised from death, never to die again. That message alone is enough to change our view of the entire universe. The universe itself only fits because of Christ. ©Revd Richard Bewes, a former Rector of All Souls Langham Place, London.

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We must never allow anything to blind us to the true significance of what happened at Bethlehem so long ago. Nothing can alter the fact that we live on a visited planet. - J B Phillips

We are better givers than getters... The Christmas story - the one according to Luke, not Dickens - is not about how blessed it is to be givers, but about how essential it is to see ourselves as receivers. - William Willimon

We must speak in practical terms. Either Christ's coming has meaning for us now, or else it means nothing at all. - Christoph Blumhardt

Thankfully our Saviour is not Father Christmas. He gave His best to us because we were not good. - Moe Bergeron

He who has no Christmas in his heart will never find Christmas under a tree. - Roy Smith

25th December: The History of Christmas

And finally, in the build-up to Christmas, remember:

Drive carefully. It's not only cars that can be recalled by their maker.

From the Chief Scout

In the words of CS Lewis, when the children in Narnia ask if Aslan (the Christ-like figure) is safe, the reply comes:

'Safe, no way, but he's good.' I'm not sure if I have the exact words, but for me it sums up the journey of faith... For me, it has been a lifetime's journey that is still continuing of unravelling religion from faith. The heart of Christ's message was about freedom and fun and light and love and forgiveness and risk-taking - always messy. *Bear Grylls, interviewed after the publication of*

(Continued on page 21)

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 'misrule' - 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>



The First Carol Service

Did you know that the first Carol Service, a Service with 9 Lessons and Carols, was celebrated in 1880 by the new appointed bishop Edward Benson of Truro, Cornwall. He, later became Archbishop of Canterbury. The Service took place at 10.00pm on Christmas Eve in a large wooden building that was being used as a temporary Cathedral as the main Truro Cathedral was being rebuilt.

The Service was first performed at King's College in 1918 as a way of the college celebrating the end of the First World War. The new college Dean, Eric Milner-White, who had been an Army Chaplain in WWI, wanted a different and more positive way of celebrating Christmas for the choir and people in the college. In 1919 he changed the opening hymn/carol to be 'Once in Royal David's City' and set the main order and structure of the lessons/readings as it still is today.

The BBC first broadcast the service, on the radio, in 1928 and apart from 1930 it's been broadcast every year since - even during World War II. ©Parish Pump

*(Continued from page 20)
'Soul Fuel', a
daily devotional
of 365
reflections for
the year.*

*A cheerful giver
does not count
the cost of what
he gives. His
heart is set on
pleasing and
cheering him to
whom the gift is
given. Julian of
Norwich*

*We make a living
by what we get.
We make a life
by what we give.
Duane Hulse*

*Gossip is letting
the chat out of
the bag.*

*If you pray for
another, you will
be helped
yourself.
Yiddish proverb*

*Think not on
what you lack as
much as on what
you have. Greek
proverb*

*It is lamentable
in one of the
richest
countries of the
world that 1.6
million people
have needed
food parcels
over the past
year to make
ends meet. The
Bishop of St
Albans, Dr Alan
Smith.*

Christmas Bells

*I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!*

*And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along
The unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!*

*Till ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime,
A chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!*

*Then from each black, accursed mouth
The cannon thundered in the South,
And with the sound
The carols drowned
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!*

*It was as if an earthquake rent
The hearth-stones of a continent,
And made forlorn
The households born
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!*

*And in despair I bowed my head;
"There is no peace on earth," I said;
"For hate is strong,
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"*

*Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The Wrong shall fail,
The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will to men."*

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow - 1807-1882

Mission Statement

Founded in 1979, the Anglican Church Twente belongs to the Church of England's Diocese in Europe. The Church of England forms a part of the worldwide Anglican Communion of more than 80 million people

The Anglican Church Twente, based at St Mary's Chapel, Weldam provides a Christian ministry in the East Netherlands. Most of the congregation live in the towns and villages of the East Netherlands and across the border in Germany. Some come from further afield.

The Anglican Church Twente holds a service every Sunday at 10:30 am in English. The church offers Holy Communion to all baptized Christians, Sunday School to nurture and educate children in the Christian faith, and a warm welcome to people of all nationalities.

The main aims of the Anglican Church Twente are to:

- † Offer Christian worship by the rites of the Church of England in the English language.
- † Provide pastoral care to all who are in need of such help.
- † Promote a lively fellowship among those who attend the services.
- † Support outreach in Christian ministry wherever there is a need.

Stewardship

We are a self-supporting church and raise all income from our giving and stewardship. As God has blessed us, we thank Him by giving accordingly.

A Prayer for St Mary's

*Almighty and everlasting God
Creator and ruler of all things in heaven and earth,
Hear our prayer for the St Mary's family.
Strengthen our faith,
Fashion our lives according to the example of your Son,
And grant that we may show the power of your love,
To all among whom we live.
Inspire us in our worship and witness,
Grant us all things necessary for our common life,
And bring us all to be of one heart and mind
Within your Holy Church
Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
Who lives and reigns with you in the Holy Spirit
One God, now and forever,
Amen.*

