

# Advent, Christmas, Holy Innocents, Epiphany

ANGLICAN, BAPTIST, METHODIST, MORAVIAN, UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

## CHURCH OF THE HOLY FAMILY

1 Cuddesdon Way, Blackbird Leys, Oxford OX4 6JH

### BLACKBIRD LEYS



The annunciation



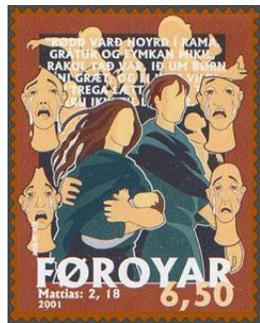
The inn



Angels and shepherds



The nativity



The Holy Innocents

The Magi



The Holy Family magazine

November 2015 to January 2016

## 1. From the Vicar's desk.

Welcome to our magazine, we have struggled hard being able to maintain a magazine monthly or even bi-monthly so here we are with our first quarterly edition. This issue has Advent just around the corner leading us through Christmas and into the New Year.

As I write I'm sitting looking over the hills of Jerusalem from the Education Block of the Holocaust Centre. A centre set up to be a reminder, as well as a memory, to the millions of Jews destroyed by the German regime in World War 2.

I have spent a week looking at the pre-war history of Europe, the Jewish history in Germany and Europe, particularly in Poland, the Nazi government and ideology, life and music in the ghetto's, before moving on to look at the questions of how could such an atrocity be possible? Where was God? How did people survive? What happened after liberation?.....Hard questions. No real answers to many of them. The centre as well as a place of international study also has a huge museum, plus many other places for memory. Particularly poignant was the 'Drops like Stars' memorial to the 1.5 million Jewish children who died. Hard to picture just what 1.5 million looks like until you think that Wembley Stadium holds 100,000 fans at capacity, so that would be 15 full stadiums just with children!

Not exactly your average pilgrimage to Israel!

Due to the recent troubles, weekend free time opportunities were strictly monitored. Bethlehem was off limits but I did manage to attend the Jewish synagogue Shabbat service and then was hosted by a local family for dinner. On the Saturday I had a very brief trip around Galilee, complete with an armed guard.

A personal highlight was a late afternoon brief visit of very selected parts of the Old City of Jerusalem, still with the armed guard. Praying at the Wailing Wall was a mind blowing experience.

The challenge as the course is ending here, is 'how will this study impact our preaching – will we be post-holocaust theologians?

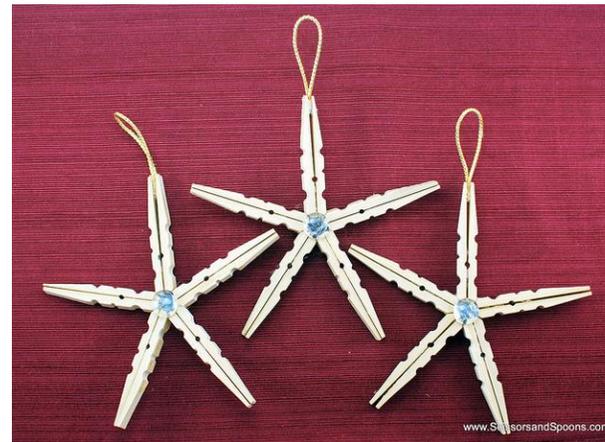
As we at Holy Family start looking towards Advent and the coming of the Christ these few weeks of preparation not for the grand celebration day but the reality of the Christ in us. Very similar questions can be asked of each one of us.

“How will this Christmas season impact our lives and witness?” “Does the birth of a tiny baby 2000 miles away, 2000 years ago make a difference to our worship and daily lives as we enter 2016?”

## 10. Christmas projects



Three bottle tops painted white a small button and tiny piece of ribbon makes a very easy Christmas decoration.



If you have some old wooden pegs, remove spring, paint them white, when dry glue back to back attach ribbon in one pair, then join in the centre. Decorate either with a button or glitter or anything

"Christmas gift suggestions: To your enemy, forgiveness. To an opponent, tolerance. To a friend, your heart. To a customer, service. To all, charity. To every child, a good example. To yourself, respect."  
-- Oren Arnold

9.

**In some churches the Collect (prayer) for the first Sunday in Advent is said every Sunday, and in some homes every day!**

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*



*The scapegoat, on whom the ancient Jews cast their sins, to be taken away into the desert*

**Don't forget the  
COMMUNITY EMERGENCY FOODBANK (CEF)**

**Please keep up the good work!**

When you're shopping, get an extra treat, tin or packet to put into the box under the table in the narthex.

2. May the Christ child come into each of us, as powerfully as He did for me this week at the Wailing Wall.

As ever, *Heather*

### Christmas quiz

Where did Mary lay her baby?



Answer

Who told the Shepherds to go and look for the baby?



Answer

How did the three wise men find the way?



Answer

What did they give Baby Jesus?



Answer

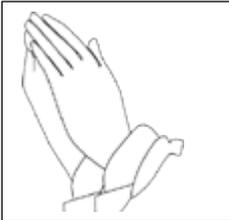
3.

Who told Mary she was going to have a baby?



Answer

What did she say when she heard?



Answer

Where did Joseph take Mary?



Answer

What did the innkeeper say?



Answer

## 8. DIARY

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**Sunday services:** Holy Communion and Children's church 10.00am, "Time Out" quiet service 6.30pm

Weekday regular events:

**Monday** Church office open 6.30-7.30pm

**Tuesday** prayer for Holy Family 12.30-1.30pm

**Wednesday** Morning Prayer 8.30am

**Thursday** Morning Eucharist 9.00am;

### **November**

**Sunday 1<sup>st</sup>** All Saints and Gift day 10am

All Souls service 6.30pm

**Sunday 29<sup>th</sup>** Advent Sunday

### **December**

**Advent Course Mondays 2pm Starts 30<sup>th</sup> November for 4 weeks.**

**Sunday 6<sup>th</sup>** Church Meeting

**Sunday 13<sup>th</sup>** Oxford Deaf Church Carol Service 3pm

**Sunday 20<sup>th</sup>** Carols by Candlelight 6.30pm

**Thursday 24<sup>th</sup>** Midnight Service 11.45pm

**Friday 25<sup>th</sup>** Christmas Eucharist 10am

**Sunday 27<sup>th</sup>** Eucharist 10am

### **January - activities yet to be announced**

#### **COG meetings:**

Tuesday 8th December 7.30pm

Tuesday 9th February 7.30pm

Tuesday 15th March 7.30pm

#### **Church meetings**

Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December

**AGM** Sunday 17th April 2016

7.

**Free Church Ministry:** As of late October, we are still not really any further forward with finding a new Free Church Minister. This is mostly due to a lack of funding. It is normal practice for Free Churches to 'fund' their ministers. We part funded Adam, but this was leaving us with a large shortfall in our budget that was no longer sustainable.

**Church roof update;** as the regular members are aware this is becoming critical again. The cost of replacing the roof has grown enormously and it has to be asked if this is the right option. The Diocese certainly doesn't advise the replacement of a like for like. The roof design is substantially flawed needing some new design. Interestingly, its younger sister, in Nottingham has also had significant problems too.

At present we have been given some funding to look at community opinions. We have held some very useful pinboard activities "2020 Vision"; at the Leys fair, Blackbird Leys Choir Concert and at other locations. Looking at what would the Church in 2020 look like and importantly what would it provide.

So far many ideas suggested were to return to our roots as a community space; perhaps with an arts theme along the lines of Ark T?

## 4. Contacts:

### Clergy

Anglican Incumbent		
Revd Heather Carter	5 Cuddesdon Way	778728
revhev2@gmail.com	mobile 07482304814	

Free Church Minister	Vacant at present	
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### Church Officers Group

Tom Baker (Secretary)	18 Partridge Walk	07874030319
Alan Tadiello (Treasurer)	2 Grebe Close	773386
Sasha East	13 Allin Close	712991
Beverley Humberstone	75 Little Bury	779678
Margaret Norwood	16 Kennett Road	769105
Andrew Pledge	2 Andromeda Close	
Gloria Phillips	1 Crowberry Rd	747345
Russell Price	190 Pegasus Road	429036
Cora Spencer	16 Windale Avenue	747679

### Church Office:

**The Church Centre, 1 Cuddesdon Way 396241**

**Office Hour: Mondays 6.30 – 7.30 pm**

to talk about:

- |                             |                     |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| ◆ Thanksgiving and Blessing | ◆ Dedication        |
| ◆ Weddings                  | ◆ Banns             |
| ◆ Infant Baptism            | ◆ Adult Baptism     |
| ◆ Confirmation              | ◆ Church Membership |

### Some of the organisations already using the Church Centre:

Guides	Heather Retter	747562
Brownies	Jennifer Pleass	07886 757338
Rainbows	Alexandra Cripps	772734

**Web-site:** [www.holyfamilybbl.co.uk](http://www.holyfamilybbl.co.uk)

**Please let Victoria have anything for inclusion in the next magazine as soon as possible by email or post as follows:**

Victoria Mort	232 Abingdon Rd OX1 4SP	246342
<a href="mailto:victoria@morthome.com">victoria@morthome.com</a>		

### From the registers

#### Baptisms:

6.9.15 Lexi May Jean McBlain

4.10.15 Ethan Allan Smith

#### Funerals:

7.9.15 Sheila Smith

1.10.15 Doreen Wright

5. A Christmas poem by Russell's sister:

**The Voice of a Lamb**

I was new to the world, had seen,  
soon after I opened my eyes  
red sky above my mother's flank,  
then pink across the whole flock  
as I suckled and slept, suckled  
and slept. Later the sky was blue  
and the earth cold. Men and boys  
moved us along the hillside  
to the lambing pens.

I was deep in sleep when all  
became restless, bleating  
and shifting as the bright sky  
opened, and the night turned  
to a white urgency, a messenger,  
then high singing that made us  
shiver. The shepherds  
shaded their eyes and listened,  
given no choice. Dark returned  
and they disputed the meaning  
of what they had seen.

One old man left behind  
to watch over the ewes,  
the group took to the track  
that led down from the hills.  
I was taken, milk in my mouth,

6.

from my mother's side, tucked  
between a man's jerkin and coat,  
and carried along. Someone spoke  
of the need for a newborn lamb.

The place was small and dark;  
starlight pierced the broken roof  
and faintly lit a man, and a woman  
who held a baby to her breast.  
to the mother, who wondered at it.  
I was given to the father. I heard  
*newborn* and *spotless*. Watching  
The shepherds told their tale  
of angels and song, over and again

the milky baby made me hungry,  
and I cried out from the straw.

Elizabeth Danson



"Let us remember that the Christmas heart is a giving heart, a wide open heart that thinks of others first. The birth of the baby Jesus stands as the most significant event in all history, because it has meant the pouring into a sick world the healing medicine of love which has transformed all manner of hearts for almost two thousand years... Underneath all the bulging bundles is this beating Christmas heart."  
-- **George Matthew Adams (The Christmas Heart)**