

# *the* KEY

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50p

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News of Saint Peter and Saint Paul

**BROMLEY PARISH CHURCH**

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"Proclaiming the Word and Work of God"

Member of Churches Together in Central Bromley



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Dear Reader,

Welcome to the December edition of the Key, the last magazine of 2022!

There is lots of encouraging content in this magazine, including a sermon on the Lord's Prayer by Mike, some Christmas reflections by Jane, and some lovely prayers and poems for you to enjoy.

We also have some updates on our friends in Harare and from the charity Footsteps International.

There is lots happening in our Church over Christmas so please see the list of Christmas services and also remember the Christmas tree festival, even if you're not a regular Church-goer you may enjoy sharing our beautiful Church at Christmas time, and please be assured you will be very welcome!

With love and wishing you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas,

Lisa

*Many thanks to Mike for sharing his sermon from the Harvest Festival service.*

**TEXTS:**

Old Testament: Exodus 16.13-21

Psalm:

New Testament: Acts 2.42-47

Gospel: Matthew 6.7-15

This morning I'd like to start by quoting from one those sources of modern theology, "Monty Python's Life of Brian". There's a scene at the start of the film where the real Jesus can be seen delivering the Sermon on the Mount before the camera pans out and the parody of some of the excesses of religion starts. As the camera pans out the figure of Jesus becomes harder to see and his voice harder to hear. Those standing far away and straining to hear catch Jesus saying "Blessed are the peacemakers", but mishear this as "Blessed are the cheesemakers." One rather well-to-do woman declares, "What's so special about the cheesemakers?" At which point her rather know-it-all husband – think, Church of England Reader, in modern terms – replies, "Well obviously it's not meant to be taken literally, it refers to any manufacturer of dairy products."

This is the second in the series of sermons about prayer, with particular focus on The Lord's Prayer. This week we are focusing on the line "Give us this day our daily bread", or "Give us today our daily bread", depending upon which version is used.

In addition, and appropriate as we think about this line from the Lord's Prayer, we celebrate this morning our Harvest Festival when we give thanks for all those who supply our daily needs – cheesemakers, manufacturers of other dairy products and, of course, so many more!

"Give us today our daily bread".

Prayed in isolation this may seem very demanding, grasping, greedy, entitled. At times this may be an appropriate way to pray, as Jesus encourages us at other times to make demands of God, our Father.

Seen within the structure of the Lord's Prayer, the words assume a different flavour, or possibly a number of different flavours. Some have written that, in a prayer given to us by Jesus, the reference cannot surely be to something as physical, earthy, practical as mere bread. Surely, they say, Jesus must have been referring to something far more elevated and spiritual, something that goes to the very heart of our soul.

As we heard from Peter last week, the prayer opens by addressing God as "Our Father", acknowledging that his name is holy, recognising that he reigns in heaven, and calling for his reign – his will and his kingdom – to also extend to the whole earth. And at the end, we acknowledge that this kingdom, and the power and glory that go with it, belong to God NOW and beyond, stretching for ever into the future!

Without this initial focus on God, it becomes less prayer – a conversation or relationship as we enter the presence of, and experience the love of, God – and more a chaotic or unstructured jumble of our worries, desires, needs echoing around our heads, which may then remain unresolved, or lead us down paths of greed and selfishness.

More importantly it gives leading billing to God and his kingdom, his priorities and agenda.

And these wonderful passages sandwich what must be the meaty, spiritual filling, which sure enough refers to forgiveness of sins, freedom from temptation and protection from evil – our spiritual and moral needs.

So WHAT is Jesus doing by including in this great, cosmic prayer a request that we get a bit of bread every day? You can see why the great searchers for truth would want to see beyond something as mundane as a bit of bread. No. It has to be something more. As our character from Life of Brian would declare, “Well, obviously it’s not meant to be taken literally.”

Well, actually, it is meant to be taken literally. Or it least it can be. But before we get there, it can be more than simply bread or the necessities of life. It can be taken to be more than literal. For bread is used in so many ways in the Bible, from the basic commodity that sustains physical life to the spiritual food that nourishes our soul and brings us closer to God. And there is all sorts of symbolism along the way. Jesus describing himself as the bread of life. Jesus sharing meals and breaking bread with all manner of people, often thought to be the wrong sort of people, or meals happening at the wrong time. Jesus sharing bread with his disciples at the Last Supper, or revealing himself to the disciples on the road to Emmaus in the breaking of bread. It is there in the Eucharist which we celebrate today and which is central to our worship each Sunday and on other occasions. In doing so we join with those early Christians we heard about in our reading from Acts who “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers”.

But if this one line can be loaded with so much meaning, we do not do it justice unless we also read it literally and allow ourselves to pray it for ourselves, our material, emotional and spiritual needs, whatever they may be.

Before we get to forgiveness or battling with evil, Jesus recognises that we are physical beings with physical needs, and that these need to be provided for before we begin work towards God’s kingdom. As Luther wrote, bread is a symbol for “everything necessary for the preservation of this life, like food, a healthy body, good weather, house, home ... children, good government and peace” – in other words the necessities rather than the luxuries of life.

But our prayer is not just offered for ourselves, even if we pray it whilst we are alone. More often, returning back to our reading from Acts, it is about praying and acting together, in community.

Whoever we pray it for, we have this double formula – “Give us this day our daily bread”. We are praying each day that we shall have enough of whatever we need, or trusting that God will provide us with whatever he considers we need, to get us

through the day, but with the confidence of knowing that God will also provide for us tomorrow as well.

Our reading from Exodus tells the story of God providing for the Israelites in the wilderness with the bread for them to eat, with each not necessarily receiving the same, but receiving what each person needed. The instruction was to gather only as much as was needed, with those taking too much finding nothing left over but those taking not enough finding no shortage.

So when we pray this line, we can ask for ourselves whatever it is we need, but no more. In doing so, we also pray for those whose needs are not met – especially of the basics simply to survive or to live, but also of whatever is missing in their lives, material or spiritual.

This Harvest Sunday I would like to conclude with the following thought. A number of writers made the same point in different ways.

As we pray the Lord's prayer, not only do we raise our petition to God that he bring about his kingdom and provide for the needs of the world, but there is a growing dawning, a light becoming brighter each time it is prayed, that we should become part of God's answer to our own prayers, and that we might have to do something about it.

When writing about Jesus' feeding of the five thousand, another pointed out, when the disciples informed Jesus of the crowd's need to eat, at each step Jesus acted through his disciples – you give them something to eat, he replied; the disciples provided the loaves and fishes; the disciples distributed the food after Jesus gave thanks to God and blessed the food; and the disciples collected the remains of the food. Jesus could have simply called food down into everyone's laps, but he wanted to act through the disciples.

Or, from a different angle, when we pray to God, as Calvin wrote: "Believers do not pray with the view of informing God about things unknown to him, or of exciting him to do his duty, or of urging him as though he were reluctant." Or as Luther summarised: "By our praying ... we are instructing ourselves more than we are him."

Whilst we pray to God, we know that his answer to our needs or those of the world is often to be found in the words and actions of others. The more so at Harvest Festival when we give thanks to God for his creation and all that sustains us, but also for those who make this possible: farmers and fisherman; those who process, manufacture and distribute our food; those whose creativity allows us to enjoy our food in such a variety of ways. But it is also a time of humility when we are reminded that, despite the inequalities of the distribution of food and other resources, we all have the same basic needs of food, clothing and shelter. For many in the world these basic needs are not being met so that, whilst we can pray that they too should receive their daily bread, we can give thanks to God if we have escaped poverty and can rely on him to provide our daily bread.

Amen

To my Child

Good morning, this is GOD.

Today I will be handling all of your problems. Please remember that I do not need your help.

If the devil happens to deliver a situation to you that you cannot handle, do not attempt to resolve it. Kindly put it in the SFGTD (Something For God To Do) box. It will be addressed in MY TIME, not yours.

Once the matter is placed into the box, do not hold onto it. Holding on will delay the resolution of your problem.

If it is a situation you think you are capable of handling, please consult me in prayer, to be sure that it is the proper resolution.

Because I do not sleep, nor do I slumber, there is no need for you to lose any sleep. Please rest, my child.

If you need to contact me, I am only a prayer away. My prayer line is open 24 hours of your day. I love you and will always be with you, wherever you may go.

As with all good things, pass my message on.

Love

GOD

*Author unknown*

*Many thanks to Jane for sharing some memories and reflections around Christmas.*

'I wish that it was Christmas every day'. I wonder if any of us could truly go along with that sentiment which was a hit song a few years ago?

At about this stage in December most of us are beginning to panic as we become aware of just how short a time is left before 25<sup>th</sup> to accomplish all those self-imposed tasks we undertake each year – the letter-writing and phone calls, card-sending, gift-buying and -wrapping - and, if entertaining, the cleaning and catering; what an exhausting treadmill we feel obliged to chase around!

It's not meant to be like this, of course. Remember our carefree, excited anticipation as children, when Christmas was the high spot of every twelve months – and how endless the year between seemed? I recall especially the Christmas when, aged seven, I suspected my long-held wish for a dolls' house was going to be granted. When I was older I learned what a task the provision of this had been for my Mum; my Dad was not a DIY man, and the structure had been left to her to assemble from a hardwood packing case, though my Grandad assisted with window installation. After I'd gone to bed she and my brother, five years my senior, would get to work and with much imaginative skill she created a four-roomed house complete with staircase, curtains, tiny pictures and furniture made from painted icecream tubs, plus a few bought pieces.

The house was placed where I would see it on waking, and on Christmas morning she so wanted to witness my reaction that she stood shivering in her knitted dressing-gown at the end of my bed – no central heating in those days! But would I cooperate? Despite her urging, I carefully examined the contents of my stocking and methodically unwrapped my other gifts first; while excitement mounted within me, I felt compelled to keep this most coveted present until last! What joy when I finally allowed myself to gaze upon it, and what pleasure it provided over following years!

I believe this is how God wants us to receive the greatest gift He could make to us – Jesus. Not of course, that this is a present to be 'kept until last'.

It is ours every day of the year; indeed, the four letters G I F T could stand for 'God Is Forever There'. Immanuel – God With Us. It is **really** freely given, unlike the so-called 'free' gifts which come unbidden in the post from mail order companies seeking an order. There is no pressure; we have the choice of whether to unwrap it or leave it undiscovered and gathering dust during our lives. How blessed we are that this gift of God's son never wears out and, even if neglected, is **always** accessible.

In the certain knowledge of His steadfast care and love for us, we can indeed enjoy, in its fullest sense, 'Christmas every day'

May our lives be like the light of that Bethlehem star, shining in dark places and sharing God's love, this Christmas and in the new year to come.

*Thank you to Ed for keeping us updated about the situation in Zimbabwe, where our sister parish, St Paul's is located in Harare.*

Hyperinflation continues in Zimbabwe, which has led to people leaving their government jobs as they are paid in Zimbabwean dollars, the currency of the country; instead they are working in the black economy trying to acquire foreign currencies. An honest alternative has been breeding cattle as they can be exchanged for valuable goods or services. Water supplies have been cut off for days at a time and electricity is usually only available for 10 hours at a time. This situation has led to 4,000 health workers leaving the country since 2020, which explains why the medicine day run by St Paul's (mentioned in last month's article) is of such great value.

World Bank statistics show that Zimbabwe now has the highest food inflation in the world at 353%; even higher than Lebanon which stands at 208%. This is a far cry from when I first went to Rhodesia, as it was called then. In the late '60s, the country was a massive exporter of food and was known as the bread basket of Africa. This all changed when the government confiscated the white owned farms and, in some cases, imprisoned and even murdered the innocent farmers. James, a white farmer that I knew, provided homes - as well as land to farm to all his employees along with a primary school and clinic. When his farm was confiscated, all the employees were fired and evicted.

Five years later, only 10% of the original white farms were operational. The situation could have recovered in a few years if the indigenous farmers had been allowed to farm; however corrupt government ministers and others took control of the farms and in most cases did nothing with them. Many of the white farmers, including James, fled to Mozambique and farmed there. My nephew, who has a degree in Agriculture, had to leave the country for Mozambique because his skills were no longer wanted in Zimbabwe. There, he has a successful career and is paid enough that he can afford to bring his family to UK every year. Here he is on the left with my son and daughter. As you can see, he is not suffering from a shortage of food

in Mozambique. 😊 The farming economy situation has improved somewhat recently but not in the food sector. Preference is given to external markets to acquire foreign currency with the sale of flowers and tobacco.

The rains have been good in most areas, which has helped ease the situation, but the poor economy means that poverty prevents many from being able



to purchase enough food. The impact can be seen by the United Nations estimate that 27% of children have stunted growth. Unfortunately, in some parts of the country there has been a drought which has aggravated the situation. International aid agencies have stepped in to help 10% of the population. Unfortunately, only areas sympathetic to the government are likely to receive this help.

Our partner church, St Paul's, is doing its best to help this situation. It plans to deliver at least 100 hampers before Christmas. 31 will be taken to their partner church St Claire's in Murewa, a small town in the countryside, 19 to a childrens' home, also in Murewa and 50 for the community around St Pauls. The contents of each pack are listed here. It can be expected to last a single person one month. Each pack cost US\$35 or about £28. This is a lot of money, £2800 in total, for a church in a poor district of Harare. If this article moves you then please make a donation to St Pauls, which can be economically sent to them via Rochester Diocese.

**CONTENTS OF A HAMPER**

- 10 kgs mealie meal
- 2 litres cooking oil
- 2 kgs sugar
- 2kgs flour
- 2kgs rice
- 500 g washing powder
- 500 g soya
- 500g sugar beans
- toothpaste
- 1 pkt candles
- 1 pkt matches
- 500g Vaseline
- 100 g Matemba (salted dried fish)
- 50's teabags
- 1 laundry bar
- 1 tablet bath soap
- 1 kg salt
- 1 bird chicken



**25<sup>th</sup> December: The man who married Mary**

The traditional Nativity scene on our Christmas cards has Mary with the Holy Babe. Around her are the shepherds and Magi. We may also see stable animals, angels and a star! While Joseph is often included, his presence seems to be of minor importance.

After all, we praise God for Jesus with our familiar Christmas carols, mentioning angels, shepherds, Wise Men and Mary but the name of Joseph is absent! Why is Joseph given a low profile? For he is a man to be remembered.

Joseph was a resident of Nazareth. He worked as a carpenter and his skills would have included making furniture, repairing buildings and crafting agricultural tools. Although Joseph had an honourable profession, he would not have been a man of great wealth.

The gospel writers Matthew and Luke give Joseph a few brief mentions. After the birth of Jesus, Joseph and Mary go to the temple in Jerusalem to dedicate the Baby to God. Afterwards, they flee into Egypt to escape the wrath of Herod and much later return to Nazareth. 12 years later, Mary and Joseph go with Jesus to Jerusalem for the Passover feast. Here they lose Jesus, only to find Him in the Temple talking with religious leaders!

Apart from these verses, the New Testament is silent about the rest of Joseph's life. However, we do know that Joseph was father to other children by Mary. His four sons are named, and they had at least two daughters. (See Matthew 13:55)

And we also know that Joseph was someone who quietly and humbly took on the awesome role in caring for the early life of the Son of God. Joseph would have taught Jesus many things – not just the skills of a labourer, but the lore of the countryside which was evident in our Lord's teaching. Jesus grew up within a loving family and described God as 'Father', knowing also the good fatherly qualities of Joseph.

In the Christmas story, Joseph is placed into a situation that brought him misunderstanding and suspicion. But Joseph remained faithful in the knowledge that as long as God had spoken, the opinion of others mattered little. Before Jesus began His ministry, it is believed that Joseph died. It is likely Jesus took on many of His father's responsibilities before He left home.

In the eyes of the world, Joseph was a nobody. He was not a man of valour, fame and fortune. But he was the one who had parental responsibility for the greatest person who has ever lived!

It is sad that we often equate ordinariness with ineffectiveness. Down the ages, God has used many ordinary people to accomplish great things. God continues to use ordinary people. Like Joseph, we need to know that doing God's will is the most important thing in life. May we, this Christmas, respond to God's call to us and please Him in all that we do.

*Please use this space to pass messages on to the Church community – whether it is a prayer request, a thank you, a craft idea, a recipe...*

**Meeting Christianity Again for the First Time.**

Those of you who remember Tony Rutherford, who was Curate here three decades ago, may be interested to learn that he has self-published book with the above title. It is a readable distillation of the ideas of contemporary theology and designed to stimulate discussion. I have read it so if you are interested please ask me for more details.

Margaret Elves

*A message about charity Footsteps International from Ed, with details of how you can help their Christmas appeal.*

This charity has been supported in the past by Bromley Parish Church. It was formed by local Christians, Martin and Mary Print; you may know Mary as Dr Mary Matthews for whom we pray each Sunday as she suffers from cancer. Mary had hoped to travel to Kenya to visit the projects in November but sadly a recent scan revealed that an area of cancer has started to re-emerge (although the chemotherapy is working well in other areas) and they had to cancel the trip. Please continue to pray for her.

On a visit to Kenya in 1984, they saw street children as young as 5 searching for food in rubbish dumps and left some money with a local business to provide food. The charity has grown from there to the Sunshine Home, which cares for about 135 boys, a children's home in Mombasa for 20 children, for both boys and girls and school lunches for 350 children and some text book at the Church on the Rock school in the slums of Nairobi.

As examples of the plight of children in Kenya, these are their stories.

*Eddie Muiruri's father died tragically, so 11 year old Eddie tried to help his mother by working in a quarry to earn some money. But, he was so weak from the lack of food, that he could not earn much, and often went to bed hungry. He then joined some boys on the streets to try to find food for himself and his family, sleeping under the market stalls and in sacks - anywhere he felt he would be safe. He came to the Sunshine Centre 2 years ago.*

*An orphan cared for by his elderly grandmother, Bashir Ali went on to the streets when he was just 6 years old. He was very frightened and worried about being attacked by dogs, snakes and older boys. He was often hungry and cold, sleeping in sacks under the market stalls, and eating any leftover food he could find on the ground. Bashir was found by Mama Chege when he was begging for money. She brought him some bread to eat and then offered him a place at our Sunshine Centre where he has been cared for and given the chance to go to school. Bashir told us that he is very happy to be in Sunshine. He enjoys the food, clothes and education; he has friends and can play football and watch TV. And, he has a place to sleep and is cared for if he is unwell.*

I hope the pictures with their captions (*next page*) will tell you more than my writings.



Mary with children at the Sunshine Home in 2013

350 children at Church in the Rock School are provided with meals



Carol's father is confined to a wheelchair so life is hard for him and his children. Footsteps paid for her to train as a beautician.



A small farm at the Sunshine home provides food and is tended to by the boys.

Lydia is on work experience after Footsteps International paid for her training as a plumber



If you are struggling to think of a Christmas present for someone who already has everything, one thing that might interest you is their MAD project (Make a Difference). You can buy Christmas cards from them for prices between £5 and £100. For example, each card buys something for a child at the Home—£5 buys one month of school meals, £30 buys a term of primary education (*A breakdown of gifts is on the next page*). I'm buying some for my grandchildren to help them understand the realities of life for some children and how fortunate they are. You can buy the cards online, <https://www.footstepsinternational.org/giftcards>, or using the paper forms at the back of the church. Talk to Ed Tree if you have any questions.

# Send a Christmas gift that **Makes A Difference!**

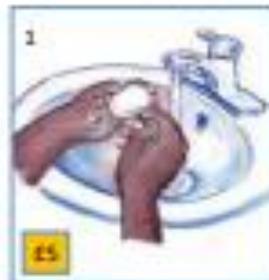
Helping some of the world's poorest people get something they **NEED** this Christmas!

Use the form overleaf to tell us what you want to give, and donate the money to Footsteps International.

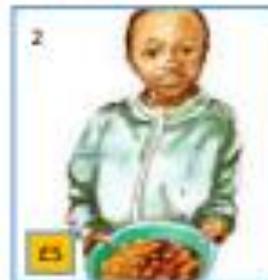
We'll send you attractive, specially designed cards that you can forward to your friends and relatives telling them what you have given on their behalf.

We'll send the money to where it will...

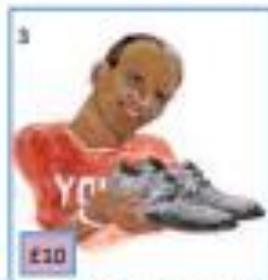
**Make A Difference!**



**1**  
Soap & hygiene products  
keep children healthy



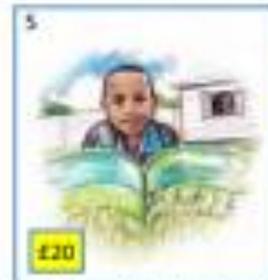
**2**  
School lunches for a month  
for a child in the slums



**3**  
Shoes for a former street boy



**4**  
Medical check for a sick child



**5**  
Reading and text books to  
encourage a child to read



**6**  
School uniform



**7**  
Home for a street boy  
(1 month)



**8**  
Primary school education  
(1 term)



**9**  
A term of vocational training  
at polytechnic



**10**  
Laptop to support a college  
course



Each card contains the wording 'Happy Christmas' and a brief description of how your gift will help young people in need.

You can view and order cards at our  
**online shop**  
[www.footstepsinternational.org/giftcards](http://www.footstepsinternational.org/giftcards)

# Bible Bite

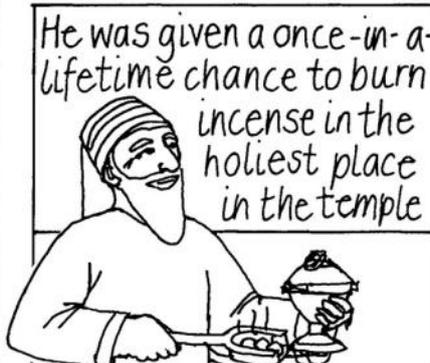
A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Luke ch. 1 verses 1-25 & 57-80

The Romans had invaded Israel and still ruled it. Zechariah and Elizabeth were an old childless couple living in the hill country.



It was Zechariah's turn for temple duty in Jerusalem.



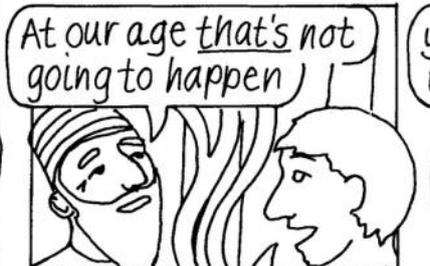
He was given a once-in-a-lifetime chance to burn incense in the holiest place in the temple



As it burnt he prayed Lord God, please rescue us, your people.



Then he saw the angel standing next to him



At our age that's not going to happen

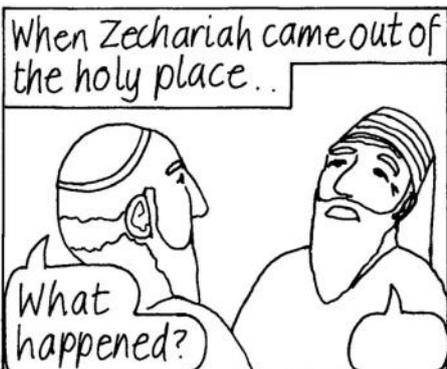


you will be unable to speak until your son, John\*, is born

God has heard your prayer, and you will have a son.

To show you that God means what He says..

\*In Hebrew, 'John' is 'Yochanan' or 'God is gracious'



When Zechariah came out of the holy place..

What happened?



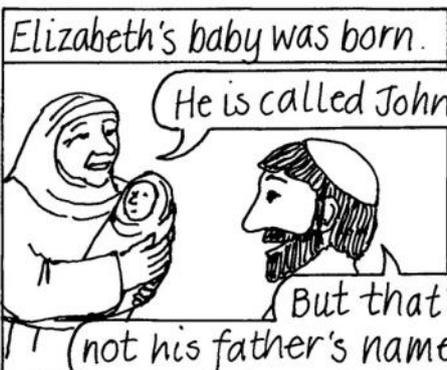
He went home and soon Elizabeth had good news

I'm pregnant!



Elizabeth's cousin Mary visited her...

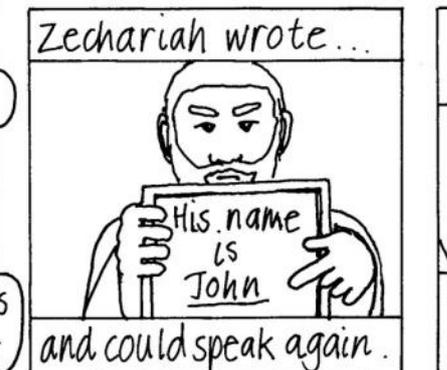
but left before..



Elizabeth's baby was born.

He is called John

But that's not his father's name



Zechariah wrote...

His name is John and could speak again.



He praised God for what He had done...

and what He was going to do...

c	o	u	s	i	n	v	a	d	e	d	l
f	e	h	g	o	n	d	n	g	s	t	f
o	f	l	o	n	c	g	m	e	e	i	
g	c	h	i	l	d	l	e	s	s	m	s
m	a	r	y	z	y	l	l	n	s	p	r
p	r	e	g	n	a	n	t	u	s	l	a
j	o	h	n	s	x	b	o	b	g	e	e
s	o	d	u	t	y	i	e	i	a	e	l
h	i	r	e	s	c	u	e	t	m	b	i
z	e	c	h	a	r	a	i	a	h	u	y
j	n	a	r	o	m	a	n	s	q	r	u
h	n	g	p	r	a	y	e	r	t	n	r

God

temple

duty

incense

Jerusalem

rescue

gracious

cousin

Romans

holy

Elizabeth

prayer

childless

pregnant

invaded

Zecharaiah

Mary

Israel

name

burn

angel

son

baby

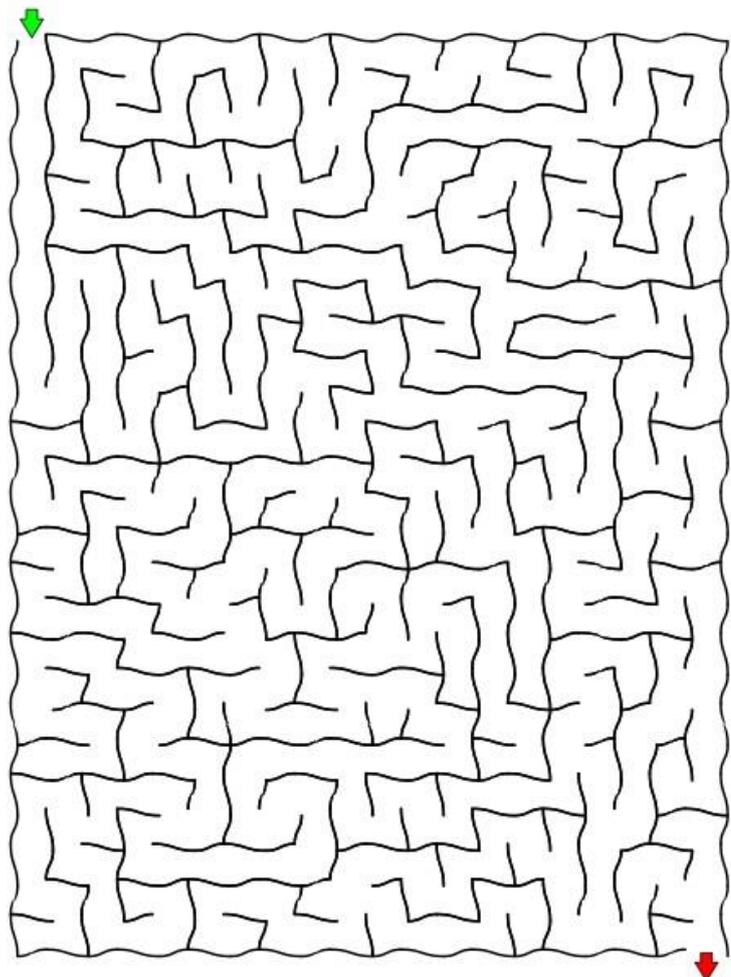
John

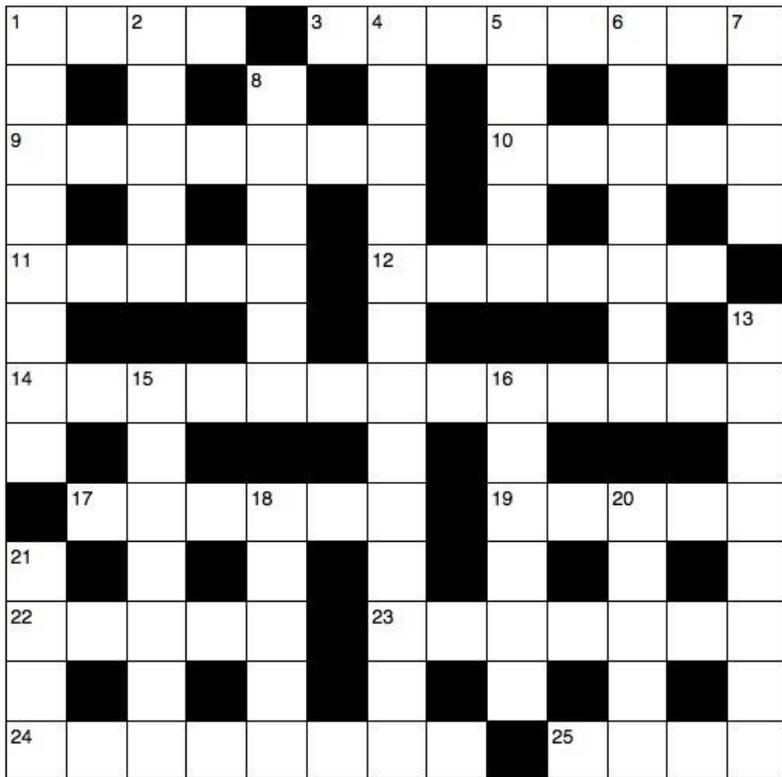
1	5		3					9
2		4			8			5
6								
	1				6		2	
	9		5				4	
								8
8			7			6		4
4					2		1	7

Sudoku:

Insert numbers 1-9 in every row, column and 3x3 box.

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**Answers:**  
**ACROSS:** 1, Hide. 3, Disgrace. 9, Sonship. 10, Oaths. 11, Tutti. 12, Ignore. 14, Foreknowledge. 17, Ashram. 19, Men or. 22, Aroma. 23, Nineveh. 24, Amethyst. 25, Trod. **DOWN:** 1, His staff. 2, Do not. 4, Imprisonments. 5, Groan. 6, Altered. 7, Easy. 8, Shrink. 13, Searched. 15, Restore. 16, Lament. 18, Reach. 20, Never. 21, Jada.

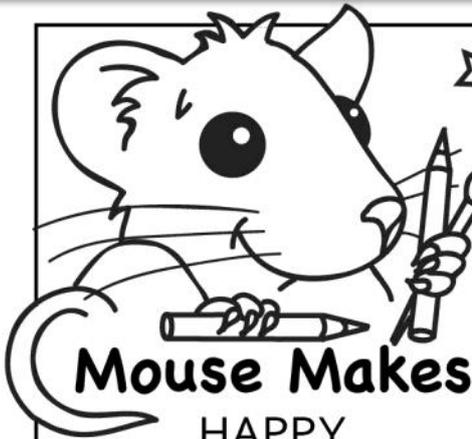
**Across**

- 1 'How long will you — your face from me?' (Psalm 13:1) (4)
- 3 'Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the — he bore'(Hebrews 13:13) (8)
- 9 Shish sin (anag.) (Romans 8:15) (7)
- 10 Solemn pledges (Matthew 5:33) (5)
- 11 Italian term for full orchestra (5)
- 12 'For he who avenges blood remembers; he does not — the cry of the afflicted' (Psalm 9:12) (6)
- 14 Prescience (1 Peter 1:2) (13)
- 17 Where a Hindu holy man lives (6)
- 19 'If he found any... who belonged to the Way, whether — — women, he might take them as prisoners' (Acts 9:3) (3,2)
- 22 Fragrance (2 Corinthians 2:15) (5)
- 23 Vine hen (anag.) (Jonah 1:2) (7)
- 24 Precious stone decorating the twelfth foundation of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:20) (8)
- 25 'Will you keep to the old path that evil men have — ?' (Job 22:15) (4)

**Down**

- 1 'Then Moses raised his arm and struck

- the rock twice with — — ' (Numbers 20:11) (3,5)
- 2 'You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, " — — murder"' (Matthew 5:21) (2,3)
- 4 One of Paul's many hardships endured as a servant of God (2 Corinthians 6:5) (13)
- 5 'We ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, — inwardly' (Romans 8:23) (5)
- 6 Changed (Daniel 6:8) (7)
- 7 'My yoke is — and my burden is light' (Matthew 11:30) (4)
- 8 Recoil (Revelation 12:11) (6)
- 13 'O Lord, you have — me and you know me' (Psalm 139:1) (8)
- 15 ' — to me the joy of your salvation' (Psalm 51:12) (7)
- 16 Express sorrow (Isaiah 16:7) (6)
- 18 'Then he said to Thomas, " — out your hand and put it into my side"' (John 20:27) (5)
- 20 'God has said, " — will I leave you; — will I forsake you"' (Hebrews 13:5) (5)
- 21 Son of Onam and brother of Shammai (1 Chronicles 2:28) (4)



**Mouse Makes**

HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

Read the Christmas story in **Luke 2:1-21**.

Answer the questions, colour the picture and colour one star each day until Christmas.

Where was Mary's baby born?  
Why were Joseph and Mary there?

What did Mary dress her baby in?

Where did Mary lay her baby and why?

Why were the shepherds afraid?

What good news did the angel tell?

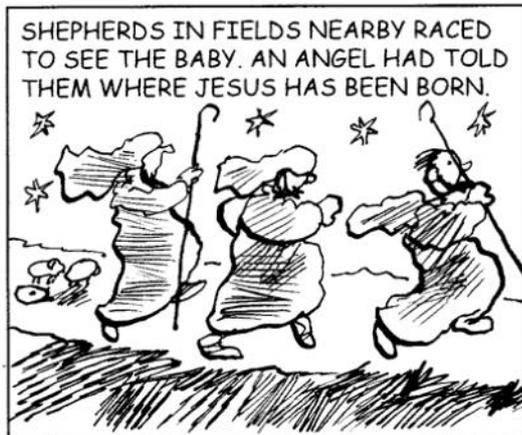
What did the shepherds do after they had seen the baby?

Who appeared praising God, what did they say?

G L  
 J O Y  
 M R C  
 S A Y G P  
 O N V O J  
 G B A B Y N G O O D A B L F  
 V O S H E P H E R D S A V I O U R  
 D A Y T M A R Y N E N F R R O  
 S C H R I S T E P G L T D  
 A L A I D R W H E O H  
 E P R A I S E L C  
 H E I V A L L S K  
 E E A N I G H T O L D  
 S M C N D E C R E E B  
 E A E I S I G N  
 E T D E



ALL • DECREE • JOSEPH • DAVID • BETHLEHEM • MARY • BIRTH • SON • LAID • MANGER  
 INN • SHEPHERDS • FLOCK • NIGHT • LORD • GLORY • GOOD NEWS • JOY • DAY  
 SAVIOUR • CHRIST • SIGN • BABY • GOD • PEACE • ANGELS • GO • SEE • TOLD • PRAISE



**“A Fuss About Nothing?”**

What, Christmas again already?  
I'll never be ready this year;  
What with presents and cards still to purchase  
And everything seeming so dear,  
My temper gets shorter each minute;  
I really can't feel in good cheer.

I'm so weary with all my vain efforts  
To drive to the town and then back.  
The traffic is denser than ever  
And all of the car parks are packed.

*But for Mary the journey to Bethlehem  
Was made on a donkey's back.*

We've a ham, and a goose and a turkey,  
Wine, puddings and cakes – for you know  
You must have a feast-time at Christmas  
And put on a really good show.

*But for Joseph and Mary no welcoming meal  
Just “Room at this Inn? Oh No!”*

We have red and green lamps in the garden  
And floodlights to brighten the wall.  
There is tinsel festooning the windows;  
Flashing lights on the tree in the hall.

*But only the moon and the gleam of the Star  
Shone over the cattle stall.*

I've bought thick feather quilts for the bedrooms.  
Comfort's such an importance, I say.  
I hope that our new central heating  
Will be fitted before Christmas Day.

*But Jesus was warmed by the breath of an ox  
And his bed was a manger of hay.*

Oh, it's all such a fuss about nothing!  
You slave till exhausted and worn,  
And nobody seems at all grateful.  
They just watch the tele and yawn.

*Yet, there in a stable in Bethlehem  
As the darkness gave way to dawn  
The message was `all about everything'  
For the Love of the World was born.*

**Christmas Prayer**

Father,

Thank you for creating us and for loving us so much that you sent Jesus to become one of us and to be our way to you. This Christmas may we know the love, peace, comfort and joy that only You can give, no matter what our circumstances. And may we reflect Your light and love in this dark world to bring glory to You. In Jesus' name. Amen.

*By Daphne Kitching*

**Christmas Day**

**C**arols sound throughout the land  
**H**eralding a special birth  
**R**ejoicing as from Heaven's realm  
**I**mmanuel comes to bless the earth.

**S**o in the town of Bethlehem  
**T**he Saviour Jesus gently lies,  
**M**ary rocks the tiny child  
**A**s angels serenade the skies.

**S**hepherds told the awesome story  
**D**ivinity will now reside  
**A**s He who ruled in Heaven above  
**Y**et Lord of all comes as a child.

By Megan Carter

**I heard the Bells on Christmas Day**

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.

I thought how, as the day had come,  
The belfries of all Christendom  
Had rolled along th'unbroken song  
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.'

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.

*By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, written in 1863*



# Christmas Tree Festival

Saturday 10th - Sunday 11th December  
12-7pm

See the church filled with twinkling lights, trees,  
plus crafts, music, refreshments and plenty of  
Christmas cheer!

Christmas Craft activities - Saturday 10th 2-4pm  
Carols in the car park - Sunday 11th 4pm

Everyone welcome - Free Entry



Ss. Peter & Paul, Church Road, Bromley, BR2 0EG  
[www.bromleyparishchurch.org](http://www.bromleyparishchurch.org)



# Christmas Services

Sunday 27th November	6:30pm	Advent Carols
Saturday 10th- Sunday 11th December	11am- 7pm	Christmas Tree Festival (family friendly)
Saturday 17th December	6:00pm	Carol Service
Wednesday 21st December	6:00pm	The Longest Night (A service for when Christmas hurts)
Thursday 22nd December	4:00pm	Christingle (family friendly)
Christmas Eve	4:00pm	Nativity Service (family friendly)
	11:30pm	Midnight Mass
Christmas Day	9:30am	Christmas Day service (family friendly)

All are welcome!



ST PETER &  
ST PAUL  
BROMLEY

St Peter & St. Paul, Bromley, Church Road,  
Bromley, BR2 0EG

[www.stpeterypaulsbromley.org](http://www.stpeterypaulsbromley.org)