

Welshpool Methodist Church, High Street

“Celebrating and Sharing God’s Love”

“IN TOUCH” issue 20

Christmas 2020

News and Updates

1. **Happy Birthday** – congratulations to the most senior member of our church family, Roy Cook, who will be 99 on 28th December. To him and other friends who have birthdays in the coming days, we send our good wishes.
2. **Good Wishes** - to Bryan Langford and to Joan, following Bryan's fall which has resulted in some broken ribs and much pain. He is being well cared for at home by family members, most with nursing expertise!
3. **Condolences** – we extend sympathy to Doris McNulty and the church family at Newtown following the death of Doris's husband Stuart.
4. **Dates for the Diary** - the church continues to be open for private prayer each Wednesday, from 10 until 12, and 2 until 4. (We extend our thanks to all who are acting as stewards to enable the church to be open).

Friday 18th December at 7pm – Gallery Group

Saturday morning 19th from 9.30am – recorded carols relayed outside with Pat J collecting for Action for Children. Weather permitting there will also be a fundraising stall. If you can't support on the day, please bring your donation to church and place in the bucket collecting provided. Much needed funds will be lost this year as we aren't able to hold our usual Monday Coffee and Carols morning or sing our carols in the street.

Sunday 20th at 10.45am - our 'alternative Carol Service' entitled “Let's take a trip to Bethlehem” will feature seasonal music, readings, and carols, including two live solos. You are invited to come in bright colours - with Christmas jumper, hat or mask!

Christmas Eve Midnight Communion Service starting at 11.30pm led by Rev Jacquie (Please note, there will be no meeting of the Bible Reading Group today)

Sunday 27th at 10.45am – morning worship with Eileen Jobling

For details of walks planned in December, contact Derek, 556117

Sunday 3rd January at 10.45am – Covenant Service conducted by Rev Marian

5. **Christmas Greetings** – at this time we especially remember those of our church family who are not able to worship with us, whether through frailty, ill-health or shielding, and so we send greetings to Richard Ballard, Pam Clayton, Roy Cook, Barbara Khan, Harry and Margaret Owen, David Penrose, Terry and Jane Postings, Brenda Rowley, Geoff and Hedydd Spencer, Shane Squibb and Eirys Windsor, all of whom are confined to their homes for most of the time, and to Joan Corbett and Jennifer Platt, residing at Dorothy Hughes House. We assure them that they are not forgotten and we wish them a Joyful and Peaceful Christmas!

The Reason for the Season.... A Christmas message from Rev Jacquie

How often do we see things about Christmas which have Christ completely taken out of them? Are people poorer for not knowing him? These are the questions which I have been reflecting on as I prepare for one of the busiest times in the church year.

In common with many people, I love Christmas. All the silliness, the glitter, the smells, and the food - but I am one of the lucky ones because I know what it is about. It is not simply a few days off from work, it has real meaning. I have always enjoyed preaching at Christmas, for me it's no hardship; it is a joy – what good news we have to tell. We are able to share this news with many people who do not go to church very often, and maybe, this is the Christmas when they will want to know more....

The readings are very familiar, and the carols we have sung on many occasions. On reflection, I am reminded of the words of the first verse of the Sussex Carol:

*On Christmas Night, all Christians sing,
To hear the news the angels bring:
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
News of our merciful King's birth*

It is a carol of joy, based on folk music, written by an Irish Bishop in 1684. You can tell from the words that this was written by someone of faith, who wanted to share the good news with all. Over the intervening centuries there have been many versions of this carol, but it was not until 1904 that Cecil Sharp and Ralph Vaughan Williams actually noted down both the words and the tune from the singing by a Mrs Verrall of Sussex. It was felt that the sentiments expressed in this carol were too important not to be shared with others, so when we sing it, and others, let's remember that we are sharing the good news of Christ's birth.

Jon and I wish a Happy Christmas to you all.

Jacquie

Christmas Greetings from the Kneale family

Christmas Greetings to All at Welshpool Methodist Church and a big Thank You to those who have worked unstintingly to keep "In Touch" and our Church warm and welcoming at this difficult time. HAPPY CHRISTMAS EVERYBODY!

From Rozel, John, Liz and Matthew Kneale

Christmas Greetings from Leah

Leah Smith would like to thank her many friends in her 'extended family'- the church – for their kindness and support since she reached "middle age"!!
Love and best wishes for a joyful Christmas to you all.

Christmas Greetings from Joan and Jennifer

We would like to send our Christmas Greetings and all good wishes to our friends at the Methodist Church, and many thanks for keeping in touch with us.

Joan Corbett and Jennifer Platt, Dorothy Hughes House

Christmas Greetings from Julia and Peter

From our home to yours, we send our wishes for a Christmas of Joy in your hearts.
Julia and Peter Francis

Christmas Greetings from David

To all my friends at Church, I wish you all a happy Christmas. This has been a painful year in many ways, with this terrible pandemic and having to stay clear of family and friends. Christmas has, for the last 20+ years, been a difficult time for me, with Delia dying suddenly on 21st December and her funeral taking place on 31st. The remembrance spoils the real meaning of the season – so thanks to so many of you who have helped keep my mind from dwelling on the past, to focus instead on the love of Christ at Christmas.

I am missing walking in town and greeting and talking to people, especially my many friends in the churches who I have missed dearly. Thank you to those who have maintained contact via the Worship Sheets, "In Touch", cake deliveries and phone calls. Once again, I hope you all have as good a time at Christmas as can be expected in this peculiar year.

Every blessing, David (Penrose)

Christmas Greetings from Tony and Janet

To all our Friends in Jubilate and in the Methodist Church - Janet and I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and all you wish for yourselves. A very Healthy and Happy 2021 to you all!

With our love and best wishes, Tony and Janet Deacon

Christmas Greetings from Andrea

To all my lovely Jubilate and Church friends, may your Christmas be happy, safe and blessed, and the New Year the beginning of a better 2021.

Andrea Davies

Christmas Greetings from Jubilate

Those who were able to meet recently for 'Faith, Fun, Fellowship and Flasks' send fellow members good wishes for a very Happy Christmas, and look forward to the time when we can all be together and sing again. Love and best wishes, Janice, Andrea, Barbara, Dorothy, Fiona, Gwenno, Joan, John, Julia, Kath, Marilyn & Megan

Light Fantastic! Have you read/heard in the news that 'the fabled Star of Bethlehem' will make a real life appearance this Christmas, shining brighter than it has in 800 years? For the rest of this month, Jupiter and Saturn will align to create a phenomenon which astronomers believe inspired the Christmas star in the Nativity story. These planets will appear to nearly collide on 21st December, the date of the winter solstice, to create a rare 'double planet' in the sky. This will be the closest and brightest the two largest planets in the solar system have appeared to be since the 13th century (the next occurrences being in 2080 and 2400!!) Between 16th and 25th December, Jupiter and Saturn will be separated by less than the diameter of the moon. NASA said the event will appear spectacular to the naked eye, and the best time to spot it will be just after sunset, weather permitting. Stargazers in Britain will need to look to the south west, and the planets will be very close to the horizon.

Reflections on 2020 from Meryl Bedford

(Wife of Rev Derek, minister at Welshpool from the mid 1970's to the mid 1980's)

I think back to 14th August, standing in a wildflower burial meadow, near Abermule, Montgomeryshire, surrounded by the Welsh hills – Mid-Wales – where we had lived for so many happy years.

It was a most beautiful day. Our two sons, our son-in-law and one grandson carried Derek's coffin. Derek had chosen the hymns he wanted for his funeral which we couldn't sing because of the virus, but we stood and listened. Many of us were in tears...

*Deep peace of the running wave to you
Deep peace of the flowing air to you
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you...
Moon and stars pour their healing light on you...
Deep peace of Christ...
the light of the world to you.*

Derek and I were married for nearly 58 years. I'm 85 years old now and, gradually, I am sort of making a life for myself. There's been a lot of sadness, but I have a great deal to be thankful for, especially my family.

My husband Derek moved into a nursing home last November to receive 24-hour care. I visited him every day, until the nursing home went into lockdown on 11th March. He became very ill over the summer and died on 31st July. As the nursing home was locked down, I couldn't be there with him when he died. I was able to visit a few days earlier, and he tried to hold my hand, but I wasn't allowed to get near him. It has been very sad indeed.

I do get lonely, but decided early in the lockdown that my job would be to telephone people on our church list who live alone, every 10 days or so. Those friendships have helped me very much, and I hope I've helped them as well.

Derek was a Methodist minister, so church has been a big part of our lives. When Derek retired we moved into a Methodist Ministers' Housing Society (MMHS) home where we lived for 28 years and were so very happy and comfortable. MMHS have been very helpful, they've handed the tenancy over to me now, so all is well.

My Christian faith has supported me through everything this year. I couldn't have coped without God in my life. Every night when I go to bed, I say my prayers, and I always – always – feel reassured. That's what the deep peace of Christ means: real reassurance that, even in times that are dark or sad or lonely, all will be well. I do believe that.

If anyone would like to speak with, or write to Meryl, please contact Graham (01938 553818) who will be happy to give you contact phone/address details

True Christmas *(Andrea Davies, from her book of poems 'An Unremarkable Morning')*

Christmas cards depict their festive scene,
Expensive gifts beneath a tree glitzy, spangled evergreen,
Yet crowned with one bright star, our guiding light;
Hallelujah!
Christmas morn, Christ is born.

I saw a Light (*Bill Rowell, from his book of poems 'The Angel on Next Door's Drive'*)

I saw a light low in the sky, through the leafless winter trees,
That called me forward, drew me on, that sent me to my knees.
I knelt then, hardly dared to move, not sure what I had seen;
and as the world grew dark around, looked where the light had been.
A flake or two of snow fell, soft and cold upon my face;
The breeze had dropped away to leave a stillness in that place
which felt serene and holy, like the half-forgotten past,
Like childhood dreams that seem so real then fade and do not last.
Another world I nearly touched, an almost opened door,
The briefest glimpse of glory then the sky grew dark once more.

A light once shone when angels sang to shepherds in a field,
And in the east a rising star brought tidings long concealed
to men who studied astral charts in some exotic land,
And sent them searching for a king across a waste of sand.
One week to go till Christmas Day, as from my knees I rose to make for home
and friends and fireside, and to the love of those
who are the lights that light my life, I knew this to be true,
That God whose angel spoke to shepherds calls to me and you;
And though the world's grown dark and cold, and full of sin and pain,
The light of love will never die, the day will dawn again.

The baby born in Bethlehem, and hailed with angel song
Would as a man bear on a cross the weight of worldly wrong.
But Christ once laid in manger bed and nestled round with hay
Seeks to be born within our hearts, to lead us in his way,
That we may light the darkened world with love and Christian cheer
Not only at this holy feast, but through the coming year,
That we may walk the way of faith, and speak of hope and peace
To those who dwell in chains of sin and long for love's release,
Until that day when angel song fills all the golden sky,
When comes again the man who on the cross was pleased to die.

The Christmas Life (*Wendy Cope, from 'The Young Oxford Book of Christmas Poems'*)

Bring in a tree, a young Norwegian spruce,
Bring hyacinths that rooted in the cold,
Bring winter jasmine as its buds unfold:
Bring the Christmas life into this house.

Bring red and green and gold, bring things that shine,
Bring candlesticks and music, food and wine.
Bring memories of Christmas past,
Bring in your tears for all that you have lost.

Bring in the shepherd boy, the ox, the ass,
Bring in the stillness of an icy night,
Bring in a birth, of hope and love and light:
Bring the Christmas life into this house.

“Round the back in Bethlehem” (*Adrian Stokes, from “Seasons with the Spirit”*)

Matthias the innkeeper had had a rotten day. Bethlehem was crammed with visitors; his best rooms were commandeered by Roman officials who demanded room service and bossed everyone around; the grand Sadducees who had booked them first were blaming the Romans; and a group of Pharisees wanted hot and cold running water to wash away the defilement of such a mixed collection of travellers. Everyone else was boasting about being descended from King David, or grumbling that Royal David's City was nothing like the pictures in the brochures. There was even a party of foreigners from some northern island, muttering through long droopy moustaches about holly and ivy and mistletoe, whatever that was. To cap it all, Caesar Augustus had decreed that the whole world should be taxed bang in the bleak mid-winter. Snow had fallen, snow on snow, and people were tramping the stuff all over his nice clean floors.

At last he had closed the bar, and seen the last customers off to bed, saying, with as much grace as he could muster, ‘God rest ye merry, gentlemen...’ He climbed upstairs, and with a short but fervent prayer for a silent night, tumbled into bed.

Hardly had his head touched the pillow when, ding dong merrily, the doorbell rang. Down he went, to find a bedraggled couple with an arthritic donkey.

‘Sorry, no room,’ he snapped.

The man looked so downcast that Matthias did not immediately slam the door in their faces. He caught the kind brown eye of the donkey and seemed to detect a jerk of its head towards the back of the inn.

‘Oh, all right,’ he said, ‘you can share the stable with your donkey. You’d better sign the register. What is your name?’

‘Joseph.’

‘and your Occupation?’

‘Carpenter’

‘You are one of those born of David's line then?’

‘Oh yes,’ answered Joseph. ‘David begat Solomon, and Solomon begat Rehoboam, and Rehoboam begat Abijah, and Abijah begat Jehoshaphat and Jehoshaphat’

‘Never mind all that,’ said Matthias. ‘I’d better get you a couple of blankets. The earth's as hard as iron out there, and water's like a stone.’

‘You mean we must spend the night where oxen feed on hay?’ asked Mary.

‘Don't worry,’ said Joseph. ‘At least it'll be quiet away in a manger.’

Matthias had just snuggled down when a tremendous burst of singing filled the room. Cursing noisy neighbours, he tried to make out where it came from. It seemed to be up in the sky and it was all about Peace on Earth.

‘Fat lot of peace here,’ he muttered, feeling very little goodwill towards anyone. But eventually the music faded and he dozed off.

It felt like half a minute later when the doorbell rang again. He shot downstairs. A collection of shepherds stood outside.

‘We're looking for ...’ they started.

‘No lost sheep here,’ he growled.

'That's as may be. We were watching our flocks by night, all seated on the ground when...'

'Get on with it! What are you looking for?'

'Oh, ah,' they answered, 'a lowly cattle shed.'

'Well, I've got a shed round the back, but it's got people in it.'

'We know. That's why we're here. You see, we bring glad tidings of great...'

Matthias had had enough.

'Round the Back!' he shouted, and slammed the door.

Back in bed he tried to sleep counting sheep, thinking at last 'All is calm', when suddenly all was bright. There was a whoosh, and his room was filled with light. He dashed to the window, looked up, and saw a star, just moving round the corner to the back of the inn. He was still looking out, when he saw some camels approaching.

'This is the limit,' he fumed. 'It must be past three o'clock.'

He stamped downstairs, flung open the door and bellowed,

'Do you know what time it is?'

'Well,' said a voice. 'According to our calculation, we rather think it's the dawn of a new era.'

'Wise guys, eh?' said Matthias, through gritted teeth.

'You could say that,' said another, 'but actually, we three Kings of Orient are. Bearing gifts...'

'Well, you can't park your camels there.'

'Where then?' asked a third voice.

'Round the Back!' he bellowed.

Just then, Joseph re-appeared though the snow, which was now deep and crisp and even,

'Er.. can I have another blanket, please? The ox and ass are doing their best, but it's still pretty cold for the baby.'

'Baby?' gasped Matthias. 'That's all I need!'

'You're right there', said Joseph with a weary smile.

Sore afraid, and grievously bewildered, Matthias fetched another blanket and stamped round the back, shouting, 'Here's your blanket!' when he was stopped in his tracks by a dozen pairs of eyes staring at him.

Everyone was clustered around, full reverently on bended knee.

'Hark!' whispered a herald angel. 'This is the first Nowell, and we're hailing the heaven-born Prince of Peace. So come, let us adore him.'

'W-What on earth are you talking about?' spluttered Matthias.

A shepherd dug him in the ribs and said,

'Calm down, mate. It's tidings of comfort and joy; you'll see,' and nodded towards the manger.

There was the baby, all neatly wrapped in swathing bands. As the innkeeper tucked the blanket around the child, his scowl vanished. When Mary smiled her thanks, he suddenly felt very small. He went and knelt behind the kneeling donkey, in the dark, round the back.

That is why you never see him in the Nativity pictures.

Sing Praises! Julia's choice of hymns for Monday 21st and Christmas Eve

This week's choice for 21st December is "The Angel Gabriel from heaven came" (StF 187). On our fourth Sunday in Advent we celebrate Mary and her greeting by Gabriel. This hymn repeats 'Most highly favoured lady. Gloria (Glo-or-or-ia)'. This event is a scene popular with artists over the centuries from the earliest depictions of the Christmas Story. An angel bringing news, with the 'shine' around which has come from being close to God, the brightness of heaven in a small town. Mary, whose life is turned upside down by the news, takes into her heart the responsibility and the awe of that news.

I have also chosen for you a hymn for Christmas Eve, "Born in the Night, Mary's Child" (StF 193). I know I don't need to prescribe any of your favourite long-loved carols to you, as you are probably playing them in your homes right now, or finding them on the radio, so instead, I chose this one for us all to look at together. It begins in the stable with darkness around. The second verse announces the clear shining light of Christ coming to the world. Then in verse 3 we recall Christ to Pilate confirming he comes to bear witness to the truth – and that spectral image of the Cross of Wood. Yet verse 4 gives us the news of Hope – "Hope of the world, Mary's child. Walk in our streets again".

As we have moved around the area in the last week or so, it has been quite obvious that this year many more people than usual are putting lights and Christmas features around the outside of their houses. It's a little bit like the rainbow idea that began in March to encourage us with hope as we were in our first lockdowns. For many this has been a period of long isolation and aloneness. The lights now appearing on buildings and in gardens bring us that cherished brightness in the darkest nights of winter. They are proclaiming a country that has not been so downhearted that it has given up. They proclaim the light of hope, the light of joy and the coming of something to cheer us.

For us Christians they proclaim the Light of the World – however gaudy they may look at times, we know they stem from a single light coming into the world which hailed the Son of God. However gaudy you might find your neighbours' attempts be glad that they are out there making a gesture of friendship to the neighbourhood. The lights and displays are this season's rainbow colours of hope for an end to the dark and dreary year. Let us see Christ "walking our streets again" as we acknowledge this gesture of friendship in a dark world, an anxious world, and still for some a time of isolation. Think of those countries where the streets are not lit up by their floodlit church buildings or their neighbours' homes, but remain dark and lonelier still in depths of winter.

As we go forward into Christmas I'm sure we shall sing, when we can, the many carols we have learned through our lives and raise our spirits in joy for the freedom to sing in our homes and our cars and our gardens. This is the time of year we have a small stash of Christmas CDs in our car. We play them as we go from place to place. Sometimes it's Bing Crosby or Frank Sinatra, then maybe next a very modern compilation and often Cathedral Choirs or children's voices. So we sing as we go, joining in the retelling of the wonderful story and its effects on our lives. This year, our lives turned upside down, but the Light, Truth and Hope of the Christmas story is as fresh today as it has ever been. Julia.

More Montgomeryshire Folktales: *(Free sets of these tales are available in the church Foyer)*

The Field of Blessing

In 1640 men cared little for the church. But when Vavasor Powell of Newtown preached, people flocked to him. The angry clergy fined the non-churchgoers, but they would not pay. They sent soldiers, but Vavasor's gatherings moved to Richard Williams' farmhouse. The soldiers persecuted Richard Williams; they burnt his house and killed his father. Richard rebuilt the house and the preaching continued. The soldiers burnt that house too. Williams did not lose faith, and he was rewarded. Each stem of corn in his field bore nine ears of grain. The field is still known as Cae'r Fendith (The Field of Blessing).

The Magic Cauldron

The Goddess Ceridwen had three children; one was ugly. Worried for her ugly son, Ceridwen prepared a potion to make him wise. Little Gwion from Llanfair Caereinion, a knight of King Arthur's round table, stirred her cauldron for a whole year. Then 3 drops splashed onto his finger. He licked the finger and became magically wise. Ceridwen found the cauldron cracked and Gwion gone. She chased him in rage, transforming them both into animals. Ceridwen caught and ate Gwion, spat him out and flung him into the sea. Prince Elphin found him, named him Taliesin, and made him his advisor and poet.

Favourite Recipes from the Saturday Lunch Menu

LEMON DRIZZLE CAKE

| | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 4ozs Soft margarine | 2 large eggs |
| 6ozs SR flour | 4tbsps. Milk |
| 6ozs Caster sugar | Grated rind of 1 lemon |

1. Line 2lb loaf tin.
2. Beat together all ingredients, either in mixer or by hand. ('All in one' recipe)
3. Put mixture in tin, level top, and bake at 180C/gas 4 for 50 minutes.
4. 5 minutes before taking out of oven, warm 3tbsps icing sugar in juice of lemon to dissolve.
5. Take cake from oven. Leave for 30 seconds then gently spoon warm juice over cake. Leave for 30 minutes then cool on a wire tray.
6. *(Optional)* Ice with lemon icing and decorate with orange and lemon slices.

BLACK CHERRY CHIFFON

This is a very easy and delicious dessert, ideal if you have unexpected guests. Looks best served in individual glass dishes.

1. Divide tin of black cherries (drained) between dishes, setting aside 4-6 cherries.
 2. Beat together equal quantities of black cherry yoghurt and double cream until thick. Pile on top of cherries. Keep in fridge until required.
 3. Just before serving, decorate with chocolate flake shavings and add a cherry.
- (Serves 4 to 6, depending on size of servings required)

Cherry pie filling can replace tinned cherries.

This can also be made with raspberries or blackcurrants (and same flavour yoghurt).

Puzzle Time answers Issue 19: My Christmas Message was "Goodwill to all at Christmas!"

1. **G**ood King Wenceslas
2. **O** Come all ye Faithful
3. **O** little Town of Bethlehem
4. **D**ing dong merrily on High
5. **W**e Three Kings of Orient Are
6. In the bleak midwinter frosty wind made moan
7. **L**et Earth and Heaven combine
8. **L**ong ago, prophets knew
9. **T**ell out my soul, the greatness of the Lord
10. **O**nce in Royal David's City
11. **A**ngels from the realms of Glory
12. **L**ove came down at Christmas
13. **L**ullay, lulla, thou little tiny Child
14. **A**s with gladness men of old
15. **T**he angel Gabriel from heaven came
16. **C**hristians awake, salute the happy morn
17. **H**ark the herald angels sing
18. **R**ejoice and be merry
19. **I**t came upon a midnight clear
20. **S**ee amid the winter's snow
21. **T**here's a light upon the mountain
22. **M**y Lord, what a morning
23. **A**way in a manger
24. **S**ilent Night (from verse 2 but not in the version in 'Singing the Faith')

Puzzle Time Issue 20: Puzzles to keep your brain active this Christmas!

Mental Challenge

1. Do they have a 5th November in America?
2. Some months have 39 days and some have 31. How many have 28?
3. If you have one match and enter a dark room where there is an oil lamp, an oil heater and some kindling wood, which one will you light first?
4. If a doctor gives you three pills and tells you to take one every half an hour how long will they last?
5. A farmer has 17 sheep. All but 9 die. How many does he have left?
6. A man builds a house with 4 sides in a rectangular shape and each has a Southern exposure. A big bear comes wandering by. What colour is the bear?
7. Divide 30 by a half and add 10. What is the answer?
8. You take 2 apples from 3 apples. What do you have?
9. How many animals of each species did Moses take on the Ark?
10. You drive a bus with 42 people on it from London and stop at Watford to pick up 7 more passengers and drop off 5. Then, in Luton, you drop off 8 and pick up 4. You eventually arrive in Edinburgh 10 hours later. What is the driver's age?

Musicals of Stage and Screen

1. Girl, visit the arsenal (5.3.4.3)
2. A ditty for the Sahara (3.6.4)
3. What Wills said to his wife on the balcony? (4.2.4)
4. Jacob's son with a rainbow jacket (6.3.3.7.12.9)
5. The monarch and me (3.4.3.1)
6. It goes round and round (8)
7. Swindler on the tiles (7.2.3.4)
8. American city (7)
9. Felines (4)
10. They're not happy (3.10)
11. Lubricate (6)
12. Cliff's vacation (6.7)
13. Decorate your cart (5.4.5)
14. Welcome, old washing agitator (5.5)
15. Boys and Girls (4.3.5)
16. He wanted more (6)
17. Albino Yuletide (5.9)
18. Celestial birth (1.4.2.4)
19. Angles of affection (7.2.4)
20. Mrs Peron (5)
21. Ace bart (anag) (7)
22. Look, a ham! (anag) (8)
23. Where you'll need your special bonnet (6.6)
24. Spouses for siblings (5.6.3.5.8)
25. Physician is fairly idle (6.9)
26. Spectre for La Scala? (3.7.2.3.5)
27. Is she a walking disaster? (8.4)
28. Completely up to date girl (10.6.6.)
29. Tuneful in a downpour (7.2.3.4)
30. Peg dolls (anag) (8)
31. Fail to see – deep breath – past (4.6)
32. Evil! (6)
33. Reveal a sailing vessel (8)
34. Messiah mega celebrity (5.6.9)
35. Actual hot C (anag) (2.8)
36. Definitely not low class (4.7)
37. She's beautiful and you can't have her (2.4.4)
38. Overnight rail service (9.7)
39. Notes reverberating? (3.5.2.5)
40. Dominating in the jungle (3.4.4)
41. Board game (5)
42. Best times? (5.4)

And finally, to make you smile: Top Cracker Jokes of 2020!

(Jokes about Dominic Cummings topped the list!)

What is Dominic Cummings' favourite Christmas song?

Driving Home for Christmas

How do you play Dominic Cummings Monopoly?

Ignore the rules, move anywhere on the board you like, and never Go to Jail

Did you hear that production was down at Santa's workshop?

Many of his workers have had to Elf isolate!

Why didn't Mary and Joseph make it to Bethlehem?

All Virgin flights were cancelled

Why couldn't Mary and Joseph join their work conference call?

Because there was no Zoom at the inn

Why did Mary and Joseph have to travel to Bethlehem?

Because they couldn't book a home delivery

Why can't Boris Johnson make his Christmas cake until the last minute?

Because he doesn't know how many tiers it should have.

Why are Santa's reindeer allowed to travel on Christmas Eve?

Because they have herd immunity

Why won't Santa lose any presents this year?

Because he's downloaded Sack and Trace

Why is it best to think of 2020 like a Pantomime?

Because eventually it's behind you

(www.theneweuropean.co.uk)

2021 Worship Sheets and "In Touch" – Worship Sheets will continue to be produced and sent out weekly, and "In Touch" fortnightly. However, if you feel you no longer wish to receive copies, can you please let us know (850514 or email rhodes4144@gmail.com) and we will remove your names from our lists. (When we first produced these back in March, I don't think we realised for how long there would be a need!)

Thanks to all of you who have been 'In touch' with your contributions. Please send your news, messages, thoughts, poems, prayers, quizzes, funny stories etc. for issue 21 which will be out on 30th December, to rhodes4144@gmail.com, by phone 01938 850514, or post to "Brynteg", Castle Caereinion, Welshpool, SY21 9AS, at the latest by Sunday 27th, but preferably ASAP. (Cake orders: Gwen 555988 or Janice 850514)

And remember: "Jesus is the Reason for the Season"

We wish you all a very Peaceful Christmas, and a Happier and Healthier New Year.

Take care, and keep safe and well.