

Crosstalk

60p



The Parish Magazine of St Bartholomew with St Chad
www.thurstaston.org.uk

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Chester

December 2020



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* **"Your magazine needs you"** *
* Please send your contributions *
* (eg. Poems. Prayers, interesting articles etc.) *
* to office@thurstaston.org.uk *
* no later than 21st December *
* * * * *

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Diary Dates

**Please see the back page for
Church Service dates and times**

From the Registers

Weddings

*We ask for Gods Blessing upon
the marriage of
4th November
Peter Taylor and Diana Fenlon*



From Your Rector

'Christmas may look different, but the story is still the same! Coronavirus will make our celebrations this year look very different from usual. However, the message of the baby born in Bethlehem is still relevant!

In one nativity play, the highlight was to illuminate Jesus, with a light in the manger, when all the other lights were turned off. At the appropriate time, all the lights went out, including the manger one. The silence was broken when one of the shepherds loudly whispered: 'Hey, you turned off Jesus.' Of course, nobody can turn off Jesus this Christmas!

The angels announced, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; He is the Messiah, the Lord.' (Luke 2: 10,11).

The birth of this baby brings great joy and good news for everyone! As the king of the universe, He has come as our Saviour. In an uncertain world, He offers joy and hope, because He holds this pandemic in His hands. This is a real cause for joy!

'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favour rests.' (Luke 2:14).

We may feel anything but peace amid the anxieties over our current circumstances. How can a Jewish infant born to a peasant family in first century Palestine bring peace to our lives today? But Jesus established peace with God through His death on the cross. Trusting the Prince of Peace for our lives brings God's peace amid the huge uncertainties we face.



As the carol says,

'Joy to the world,
the Lord has come,
let earth receive her
King.'

Rev'd Jane



The Jesse Tree takes its name from a passage in the book of the prophet Isaiah 11:1: "A shoot will spring forth from the stump of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots." It is, in short, the family tree of Jesus illustrating his descent from Jesse of Bethlehem, the father of David.

Throughout December, Revd Jane will be creating a Jesse Tree outside the Rectory, so feel free to stop and take a look - if you need to walk up the drive to do so - that's fine.

Now – and then

Reflecting on 2020
through the
Christmas story



Meeting via Zoom on Wednesday Evenings - Let Revd Jane know if you are interested and she will send you the details of how to join.

Each week we will read a passage from Luke's or Matthew's account of the Christmas story. The connection between 'now' and 'then' will be brought to life through a monologue where a voice talks about an aspect of life in the pandemic, and then switches to a voice from a character in the Christmas story. There will be a song to listen to; as well as opportunity to reflect together.

Wed 2nd Dec - Week 1 - Rules and regulations:

Our response to directives from central authorities alongside life under Roman rule;

Wed 9th Dec - Week 2 - Unsung heroes:

The contribution of key workers and the shepherds' key role in telling the Good News;

Wed 16th Dec - Week 3 - Travelling light:

Migrants' search for a safe home and the magi's journey to an unknown destination;

Christingle Service by Zoom
6.00pm Sunday 6th December
details from Revd Jane



Donations to the Children's Society
on our dedicated Church Page:-
<https://thyg.uk/CUS047543>

Christmas Eve Crib Service by Zoom
4.00pm Thursday 24th December
details from Revd Jane

Why not dress as one of the Crib characters? Here are some ideas:-



Evening Service to include Carols by Zoom
6.30pm Sunday 20th December
details from Revd Jane

At time of going to print the exact format of this service is to be decided, but it will definitely include some Carols!



We are very grateful for the one-off donations that many of you usually make when you come to church over the Christmas period. Could you make a one-off Christmas donation on line this year? Or could you drop your gift to the Rectory in an envelope for the attention of Mr K. Marley - PCC Treasurer



If you would like to make a donation to support the ongoing work of our church, you can do so by visiting the treasurers page of the website:-

<https://www.thurstaston.org.uk/treasurers-pages/welcome-from-the-hon-treasurer/>



December

All services
subject to
Government
permission
for churches
to be open!



	8.00am St Bart's	9.30am St Chad's	11.15am St Bart's	*ZOOM ONLINE	Wed 10.15am St Chad's <i>(following the Sunday)</i>
Dec 6th	BCP Holy Communion	Morning Worship		6.00pm Christingle Service	Holy Communion (9th)
Dec 13 th		Holy Communion	Morning Worship	6.30pm Evening Prayer	Holy Communion (16 th)
Dec 20 th	BCP Holy Communion	Morning Worship		6.30pm Service including some Carols	NO SERVICE on 23rd
Thursday Dec 24th Christmas Eve				4.00pm Crib Service	
Friday Dec 25th Christmas Day		Holy Communion	Holy Communion		
Dec 27 th					Holy Communion (30 th)
Jan 3 rd	BCP Holy Communion	Morning Worship			Holy Communion (6 th Jan)

You need to book a seat for these services:-

Details on front page of our website and circulated as a separate leaflet on 9th August and in August Magazine - contact Parish Office if you need a copy.

In summary: Book by email from Monday morning for the service the following Sunday, or Thursday morning for the service on the following Wednesday. You cannot book before bookings open at 9am.

You may book for Christmas Day services from 9am on Friday 18th December

Email for bookings: servicebookings@thurstaston.org.uk

You should include your name and phone number; the date and time of service you wish to attend; names of all those attending, with ages if under 16; if you have children who will be in a pram, pushchair or on your knee for the whole service please let us know. If you will be in a wheelchair, please also inform us so we can make appropriate arrangements.

If you cannot send an email and do not have a friend who can do it for you then you can book by phone on **07553 099 388**. If you can send emails, please do not use the phone number.

***To join a ZOOM service, please contact Revd Jane who will give you the details.
You can join a ZOOM service online or by landline telephone.**

Reflected Faith Series: Grace for all

Last month we thought about one key element of gathered worship – the Welcome. It is for everyone, regardless of how they look, or dress, their faith or their behaviour. This month, being the month of Advent and Christmas, let's focus on Grace.

God, in Jesus, did not wait for us to become perfect or reach up to Him but rather He came to us, in the daily mess of our lives; as and where we are.

I recently heard someone say: 'God's nature is goodness', and the Bible confirms that this is true. He cannot help it. That's what He is. He is goodness, and grace, and forgiveness, and faithfulness, and all those wonderful attributes that come from the pure essence of love.

It's what we strive for – to be more like Him every day. Then our welcome to others will also be full of grace, His grace, and not guided by our own likes or prejudices. Instead, we can reach out to others spontaneously, from a heart of love.

This Advent and Christmas it will probably be harder to welcome people into our times of worship. Virtual is not the same as actual, and actual will include facemasks. But that does not mean that we should give up on reaching out to those who visit our church. This year, more than ever, they may need us. Many will be lonely this Christmas, far from their families.

So, although our normal church services may be disrupted, we have to remember that services are not the church; WE are the church. In what has been an extraordinary year, perhaps we can each of us find an informal way of sharing our Christmas joy with anyone whom God sends our way.

This month: Have a think about what it is about Christmastime services that people love. How can we distil that into a socially distanced meeting at home, a virtual experience or into an envelope or maybe a box to their doors?



A Message from Ruth Eden

Well, I was right, things have changed and we are in full lockdown, although by the time you read this the situation will be hopefully changing again. What they will change to and what restrictions there will be we will have to wait and see. Compared to Paris however, we have it easy! My brother lives there and he was telling me about it. They have to have a permit to go out for essential journeys, with police roadblocks checking drivers. They can only exercise within a small radius of where they live. My brother said he and the dog are fed up walking in circles round their very small local park!

As I said last time, I am finding it much harder this time round and am feeling very nostalgic for the relative freedom of the summer. I have been doing some gardening, mainly tidying up, cutting back and gathering up leaves!

My loft is well on it's way to being sorted, both Chris and I were hoarders although Chris was worse than me. A lot is waiting to go to the tip, more to Charity Shops, when they reopen and some things to auction. I have bought the paint and hope to get it done before this period of lockdown finishes so I can order a new carpet!

As I have bubbled with my younger daughter I see her once a week, but am unable to see my other daughter. Hopefully I will see them soon.

I am still enjoying my zoom meetings, in fact I am on more of them now than before. It is so nice to talk to people, even though it is not face to face. I also enjoyed the Church zoom service I joined and look forward to joining more.

I am still doing quite a lot of Photography, dare I say I am slowly improving, with the help and advice from other members of the photographic society. They have been so patient with me and I am extremely grateful to them.

Keep safe everyone, and pray that we will be able to have a relatively normal Christmas. I will very much miss being able to go to the Midnight service. To me, that is "Christmas".



'Sometimes Christmas can be a frustrating time. This year I fear may be worse than most, stressful and difficult. But maybe we need to get our frustrations into perspective.'

Christmas Frustration????

I said to God, upon my knees
"O Lord, I am so cross!

"That gift I sent to Aunt Denise
"Within the post is lost!

"That tree I bought for forty pounds
"(Well, just a penny less)

"Its needles lie upon the ground
"It looks a total mess!"

"I know," said God, "I understand,
"I sent my Son, you know.

"He came to Earth, just as I'd planned
"Two thousand years ago

"Was born within a stable bare –
"The cattle heard Him cry

"He spoke of love, men didn't care
"They led Him out to die."

"No gift was given with such love
"No higher price was paid.

"He left His throne of light above
"For sin His life to trade.

"But even after all these years
"This gift you men eschew,

"So Christmas is a time of tears

"For Me, as well as you."

By Nigel Beeton

Christmas to Me

Christmas to me is nativity
And the sound of carol-singing;
But to others it is revelry
And the sound of shop tills ringing.

Christmas to me is shepherds
On a hillside attending their sheep;
And the sound of angelic voices
Over a town bathed in sleep.

Christmas to me is the Magi
Who put all of their faith in a star,
And in search of the little Christ child
They willingly travelled so far.

Christmas to me is worship
Giving thanks for the Saviour's birth;
But to many of the folk I know
Christmas has no real worth.

So what will YOU see this Christmas?
Will you think of that baby so small?
And recognise that the love of God
Came to earth that first Christmas of all?

By Colin Hammacott



Martin received the latest Christmas coronavirus regulations from the diocesan office.

Anna and Joseph

Imagine the, somewhat, frosty meeting Joseph might have had with Mary's mother, shortly before he and Mary set off for Bethlehem!

Anna: I don't believe my ears! You're taking her where?

Joseph: Bethlehem, I've got to go there, so I'll take her with me.

Anna: My daughter – 9 months pregnant and you want to take her to Bethlehem on foot!

Joseph: It's not *want* to take her – I'm *going* to take her with me. If she's out of town, the gossips can't pin down the date of the birth. Besides a son of David should be born in David's town – where else?

Anna: Oh, a son is it - you know that for sure? Where else? On the road most probably – that's if the robbers don't get you first! God forbid, Joseph, nobody knows when a baby is due! This is not the time to take her on a walking tour!

Joseph: I suppose it is a long way – perhaps I could borrow a donkey.

Anna: A donkey! Why not go the whole hog and order a chariot! You should try being pregnant and riding a donkey! Joseph – be reasonable - leave her in her mother's care.

Joseph: She's in my care now – I'll look after her. The angel said to take care of her and how can I do that if I leave her behind?

Anna: *You'll* take care of her! Suddenly you're a midwife now – as well as a carpenter. This is her first baby – the only one who knows less about having a baby than her is you!

Joseph: Don't try to frighten us out of it – we were both told, *Don't be afraid*, by the angel.

Anna: Did this angel mention any other details – like how she was going to manage - in her condition, in a strange town with no help except Joseph, the midwife carpenter – who dreamt it would be all right. On *your* head be it!

Joseph: Yes I dreamt it - I was told not to be afraid to take her – so if I have to go to Bethlehem, then she is coming with me!

Anna: (*scornfully*) Well - if an angel came to you with a personal message – then why listen to the voice of common sense?

Joseph: The angel told me it was going to be a boy and to name him Jesus.

Anna: Jesus..... my grandson! What kind of name is that? What about Reuben, after my father, or David even? Jesus, indeed - who's going to remember a name like that?

Adapted by Alan Jones

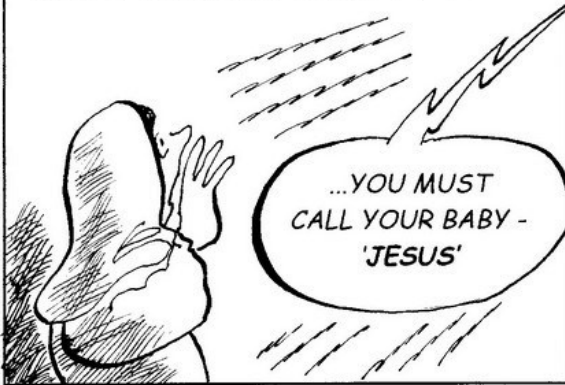


The First Christmas

JESUS WAS BORN ABOUT 2,000 YEARS AGO IN THE SMALL TOWN OF BETHLEHEM, NEAR JERUSALEM.



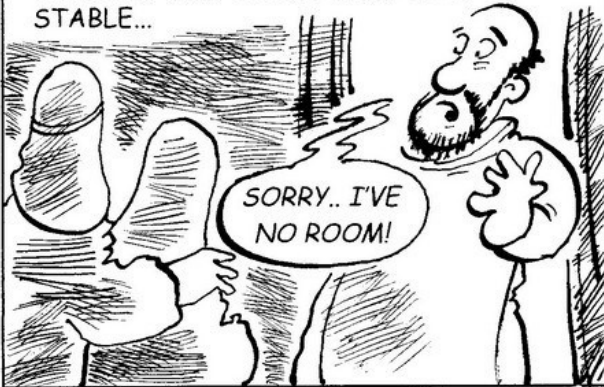
AN ANGEL HAD TOLD MARY SHE WOULD HAVE VERY SPECIAL BABY



MARY AND JOSEPH MADE THE LONG JOURNEY FROM NAZARETH TO BETHLEHEM. THEY HAD BEEN ORDERED THERE BY THE CENSUS.



BUT THE TOWN WAS FULL... THE ONLY SHELTER THEY COULD FIND WAS A STABLE...

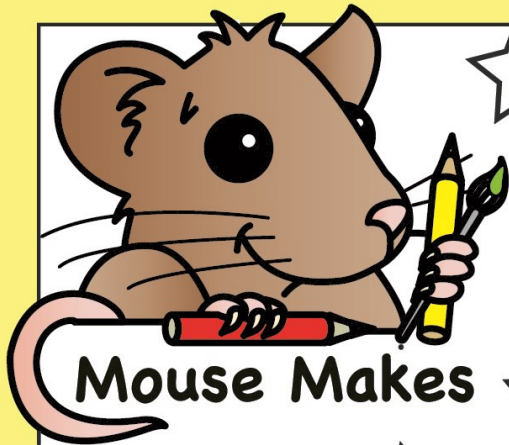


...WHICH IS WHERE THE BABY JESUS WAS BORN.



SHEPHERDS IN FIELDS NEARBY RACED TO SEE THE BABY. AN ANGEL HAD TOLD THEM WHERE JESUS HAS BEEN BORN.





Mouse Makes

HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

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

"I bring you **good news** that will bring great **joy** to all people. The **Saviour** has been born today! ...

Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased".

from Luke 2 vs. 10,11,14



A picture to colour for Christmas. Colour in one star each day as you count down to Christmas!

Silent Night

This much-loved carol comes from Austria, where it was first sung as *Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht* on Christmas Eve, 1818. It was written by Father Joseph Mohr, a young priest at St Nicholas parish church, in the village of Oberndorf bei Salzburg. As Christmas 1818 approached, he asked the local schoolmaster, Franz Xaver Gruber, to compose a melody for his carol. Gruber was organist in the nearby village of Arnsdorf, and so was happy to oblige. On Christmas Eve they presented the carol to the church during the midnight mass. The carol went on to become loved world-wide; and the version sung by Bing Crosby is the third best-selling single of all time.

Silent
Night
Loved
Carol
Austria

First
Sung
Stille
Nacht
Heilige

Christmas
Eve
Father
Joseph
Mohr

Young
Priest
Organist
Midnight
Mass

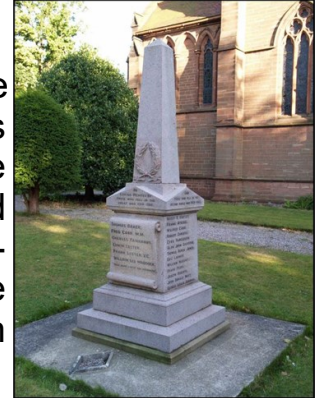
Melody
Single
Bing
Version
Third

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

A Tale of Two War Memorials

Apologies for the omission of this paragraph in Alan's article last month:-

The War Memorial at Thurstaston stands in a lawn and tree lined garden in the front grounds of St Bartholomew's Church. It was erected in the early 1920's and carries the names of six servicemen who fell in the 1st World War and thirteen who fell in the 2nd World War. It is rare for the number of those from the 2nd World War to exceed those for the 1st World War, but this is, probably, explained by population growth in the area between the wars.



The War Memorial at Thurstaston



St Bartholomew's and St Chad's
on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/stchadsstbarts/>

If you are already on Facebook it is easy to find and "like" the page. Just search for "stchadsstbarts" or "St. Bartholomew's Thurstaston, with St. Chad's, Irby" and you will find us.

If you "like" the page you will receive notifications when we add events and other informative posts.

From our page you can also share individual posts and events with others you may think would like to hear about us and our events.

Please do share this page with your friends.

You do not have to be on Facebook to view our posts.

We also have a Twitter Feed:-

[@StBartsStChads](https://twitter.com/StBartsStChads)



God in the Sciences: Follow the Star

Jesus' welcoming committee included Eastern scholars who learned about His birth through their study of astrology. I can't help thinking that the arrival of these people at Bethlehem is a link between a very early form of science (albeit mixed in with their own form of religion) and Christian faith. What better way to discover God than to explore the world and follow the evidence wherever it leads? But what exactly was the star of Bethlehem? Scientists have investigated this question over the centuries, coming up with a variety of answers.



First, there is the idea of a supernova: the massively bright explosion caused by a dying star. On rare occasions a supernova can be seen from Earth with the naked eye, remaining visible for several months. We now know that Herod the Great died around 4BC, so the actual date of Jesus' birth must be a little earlier. The supernovae that might match this timing were one in the Andromeda galaxy between March 8BC and September 7BC, and another in the constellation of Capricorn in the Spring of 5BC.

Next, comes a planetary conjunction. The alignment most commonly associated with the star of Bethlehem was between Jupiter and Saturn in the constellation of Pisces in 7BC, but not everyone is sure whether this would be extraordinary enough to be the 'star' mentioned in the Bible.

Finally, the bright astronomical object that drew the Magi could have been a comet. This idea came from Sir Colin Humphreys, Professor of Materials Science at Cambridge University, and Oxford astronomer WG Waddington, who found that a comet was recorded by Chinese astronomers between March and May, 5BC. Humphreys then speculated that the 'no room at the inn' scenario came about because Jesus was born during Passover, and the Magi visited Jesus in May or June.

People interpret the biblical account of Jesus' birth in all sorts of ways, but there's very little argument from serious historians that Jesus of Nazareth actually existed. Whatever the true explanation for the 'star of Bethlehem' may be, there's plenty of evidence that an astronomical event could have happened at the time of His birth.

I think it makes perfect sense that if God was going to enter His own creation and take on the form of one of His own creatures, it should be marked by a very significant physical event!

He gave us eyes to see them: St Kevin of Glendalough and the blackbird

During this year we have explored the beauty and wonder of our world in the rich variety of all creatures great and small. In the months of lockdown and restrictions, many of us have used the time to look afresh at the world of Nature and have learnt to value it once again.

When we look at the life of the 6th century Irish hermit saint, Kevin of Glendalough, we see someone who had that special relationship with the birds and animals. An otter, the wolf and a wild boar were his co-hermits. We are told that during Lent as he was kneeling in prayer in his cell, he held his arm out of the window. A blackbird mistook the arm for the branch of a tree and built its nest in the saint's hand. The saint waited until the eggs were laid and hatched and the fledglings had flown.



One of the earliest depictions of this story is a marginal drawing in *The History of Ireland* by Gerald of Wales in the early 13th century and now in the British Library. He visited Ireland several times and was entranced by the marvels he saw and the tales he heard. To accompany the story of St Kevin, an unknown artist drew the saint sat in his cell, cradling the blackbird gently in his left hand. Seamus Heaney captured the story in a poem in which he wondered if the saint was self-forgetful in all those months or perhaps in agony. The poet praises St Kevin because he sought no reward, but offered time and patience to care for this sign of new life.

So much has happened to us during this year for good and ill, and we wonder what the new year will bring. Perhaps St Kevin can inspire us to journey with faith and hope, and to travel through the months ahead with a renewed concern for the created order around. The Gaelic name Kevin means loved. Like him, we pray that we will love and cherish this planet, and care for the wonder and beauty of birds like the blackbird and all the animals. Then we can rejoice with him in the wonder of Creation that displays the handiwork of God the Creator.

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I can't tell you how impressed my boyfriend and I were to buy our house through Alan at Open House in February. They offered such a personal and efficient service at what was such a busy time in our lives, having just had our baby daughter in December! They were understanding, flexible with viewings & their communication was excellent. We are enjoying our new house so much & Alan even gave us a lovely bottle of champagne as a moving in present. Thanks again X"



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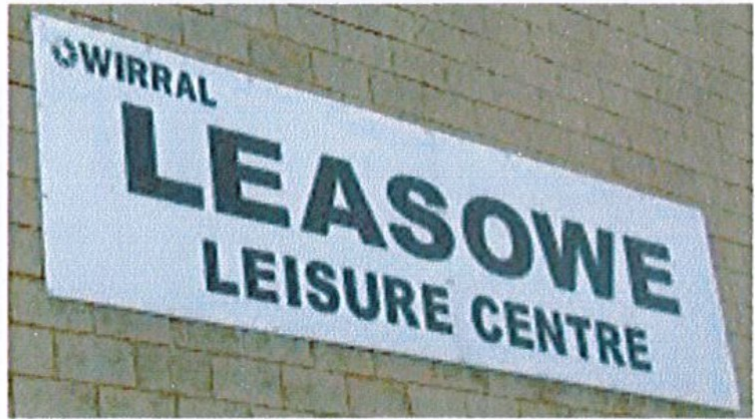
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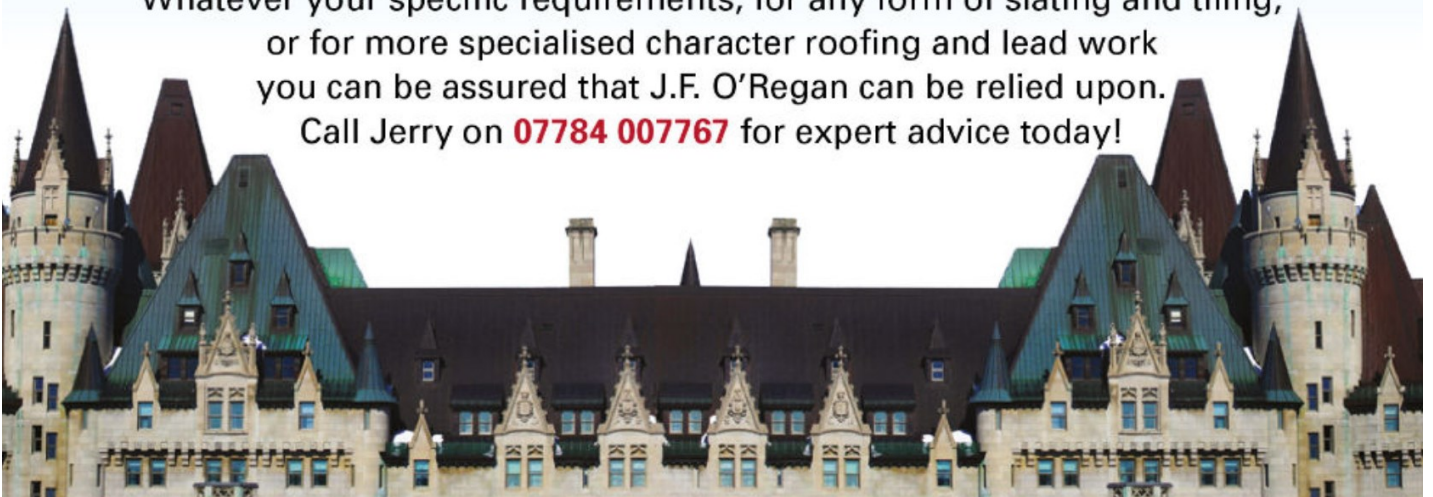
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- ♥ Keeping on top of housework
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- ♥ Enjoying shopping trips together
- ♥ Getting up and going to bed at a time that suits you
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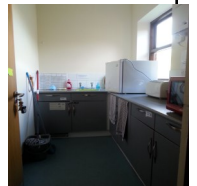
For further information please call Trudi on 0151 342 2614

Heswall Hall, 111 Telegraph Road, Heswall, CH60 0AF Tel: 0151 342 2614, Email: trudi@heswallhall.co.uk
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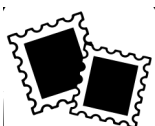
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There is a box in St Chad's foyer and
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Mrs Jean Heath **648 6015**

Leprosy Mission Representative

Mrs Pat Hulme **538 1953**

Adoption Society Representative

Mrs Chris Rostock **648 1112**

**For information about Church Services
in December 2020 - including Christmas
please see pages 6-7**



"Nice idea, Amelia, but I don't think that the Angel of the Lord Zooming with the shepherds would have the same dramatic effect."

Baptisms and Weddings

To arrange a baptism or wedding, please telephone the Rector,
Revd Jane Turner on 0151 648 1816
or the Church office on 0151 648 8169.

RECTOR: Revd Jane Turner PLEASE NOTE: Rector's day off - **Tuesday**

The Rectory, 77 Thingwall Road, Irby, Wirral, CH61 3UB

Telephone: 0151 648 1816 (Day off Tuesday) E-mail: rector@thurstaston.org.uk

CHURCH OFFICE: Mrs K Butler St Chad's Church, Roslin Road, Irby, CH61 3UH

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OPEN TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY 9.30am - 12.30pm (term time)

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