



Divine interruption

Recently, I have been pondering how often the character of our Christian faith is revealed in how we respond to being interrupted (and, as I sit down for the fourth time to this sentence alone - thanks to the demands of a small boy - I know mine isn't looking very patient!).

Interruptions take shape in so many ways to: our own health and that of loved ones; our plans and dreams; our political frameworks; the basic fabric of our day-to-day living. 'O Lord,' we cry, 'why this? Why now? What will this mean?' Being interrupted as we think, speak or are doing something, unsettles and frustrates us at the very core of our beings. Interruptions can be rude, urgent, frightening, unnecessary or irritating. Of course, sometimes they can also be joyful or exhilarating, but more usually it is not our first association with them. The challenge to hold our tongue, seek wisdom or respond in love and trust can be so hard when we are caught off-guard.

Being interrupted displaces us from a pattern of expectations that we have held at a given time and can change both our emotions and experiences in an instant. Interruptions can therefore also open spaces for the possibility of transformation, new vision and learning. Indeed, as people of faith, accepting that we have lives that not only can, but *must*, be interrupted by others, by the world and by God is exactly how we encounter grace. It is how we allow the Spirit to mould us, rather than keeping hold of the illusion of our own control.

Through Advent, we are asked to prepare again to be interrupted. We are called to be ready for our humanity to be made one with divinity; for the beginning of a life so full and so glorious that nothing in all creation is to be left untouched by its light and hope. And yet, how could we ever be ready for such an interruption?! I am grateful to a friend for introducing me to the following poem by Mary Oliver:

*Dear Lord, I have swept and I have washed but
Still nothing is as shining as it should be
for you. Under the sink, for example, is an
uproar of mice—it is the season of their
many children. What shall I do?
And under the eaves
and through the walls the squirrels*

*have gnawed their ragged entrances—but it is the
season
when they need shelter, so what shall I do? And
the raccoon limps into the kitchen and opens the
cupboard
while the dog snores, the cat hugs the pillow;
what shall I do? Beautiful is the new snow falling
in the yard and the fox who is staring boldly
up the path, to the door. And still I believe you will
come, Lord: you will, when I speak to the fox
the sparrow, the lost dog, the shivering sea-goose,
know
that really I am speaking to you whenever I say,
as I do all morning and afternoon: Come in, Come in.*

(*'Making the House Ready for the Lord'*)

What shall I do? What shall we do, as disciples preparing for Christmas? It is unlikely that we will have an undivided, peaceful season of prayer and worship that is not distracted. (In my case, it is certain I shall not have a calm and organised season of timely present-buying and card-writing!) We will be pulled in multiple directions by the demands of families, friends and our own situations. For some of us, there might even be interruptions that threaten to overwhelm us, when the hope of our discipleship might be painfully put to the test.

However, as the poem puts it so beautifully, to keep the season of Advent is to go on praying: 'still I believe you will come, Lord, you will...' Amidst all my interruptions, Lord, 'know that really I am speaking to you'.

As we move into the beginning of a new Church year, do not be afraid of the interruptions that are to come. Remember that in and through them all, our Lord will come - and perhaps, just perhaps, if we invite Him to interrupt our deepest selves, then we will find more room for His love than we could ever have planned or been ready for... So, come in, come in, indeed, oh Lord!

May the hope-filled promises of Advent and the love of the Christ Child interrupt our lives and those of our hurting world, this Christmas and always, Amen.

Rachel



PARISH DIRECTORY

Vicar	Rev. David Maher	351844
Assistant Curate	Rev. Judith Gretton-Dann	750013
Assistant Curate	Rev. Rachel Blanchflower	523066
Assistant Curate	Rev. John Polkinghorne	360743
Assistant Curate	Rev. Harry Rose	01954 211553
Licensed Lay Minister	Linda Dean	328658
Authorised Lay Minister (Admin & Music)	Ruth Banger	07764 613862
Authorised Lay Minister (Pastoral Care)	Lilas Davison	354300
Authorised Lay Minister (Social Awareness)	Liz Collinson	01954 251377
Churchwarden	Fiona Blows	329822
Churchwarden	Philip Morris	352698
PCC Chairman	Rev. David Maher	351844
PCC Vice Chairman	Fiona Blows	329822
PCC Secretary	Ruth Banger	07764 613862
PCC Treasurer	Jinty Keir	572303
PCC Electoral Roll Officer	Lilas Davison	354300
Administrator	Ruth Banger	07764 613862
Convenor PCC Buildings and Grounds Team	David Wilson	720097
Convenor PCC Children and Families Team	Hazel Maher	351844
Convenor PCC Discipleship and Teaching Team	David Maher	351844
Convenor PCC Pastoral Team	Linda Dean	328658
Convenor PCC Social Awareness Team	Liz Collinson	01954 251377
Convenor PCC Worship and Music Team	Ruth Banger	07764 613862
Altar Linen	Margaret Handley	357970
Assistant Treasurer	Bill Elsey	357622
Chalice Bearers	Bill Elsey	357622
Children's Society	Ruby Leyshon	352151
Church Hall Bookings	Ruby Leyshon	352151
Coffee Makers	Guido Barzini	300497
Fund Raising Events Co-ordinators	Ruby Leyshon	352151
Fund Raising Events Co-ordinators	Evelyn Walker	364067
Fund Raising Events Co-ordinators	Paula Carter	07952 919701
Intercessors	John Lamont	565559
Jimmy's Night Shelter	Paula Carter	07952919701
Food Bank	Liz Collinson	01954 251377
Lesson Readers	Rhodri James	357607
Good Shepherd News Editor	Ruth Banger	07764 613862
North Cambridge Area Deanery Synod	Ruth Banger	07764 613862
North Cambridge Council of Churches	David Maher	351844
Registrar of Planned Giving Envelopes	Lilas Davison	354300
Rural Development Movement	Henry Disney	359396
Sacristan	Stuart Keir	572303
Safeguarding Officer	Paula Carter	07952 919701
Servers	Bill Elsey	357622
Sidesmen & Sideswomen	Fiona Blows	329822
Sound System	David Wilson	07899 917831
Sunday Lunch Club	Jinty Keir	572303

READINGS FOR DECEMBER

Sundays and holy days

4 SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
Isaiah 11: 1-10
Romans 15: 4-13
Matthew 3: 1-12

11 THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
Isaiah 35: 1-10
James 5: 7-10
Matthew 11: 2-12

11 QUIET CHRISTMAS at 7pm

18 FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
Isaiah 7: 10-16
Romans 1: 1-7
Matthew 1: 18 - end

18 CAROL SERVICE at 6.30pm

24 MIDNIGHT EUCHARIST
Isaiah 9: 2-7
Titus 2: 11-14
John 1: 1-14

25 CHRISTMAS DAY
Hebrews 1: 1-14
Luke 2: 1-14

Weekdays at 9.30am

7 Isaiah 40: 25 - end
Matthew 11: 28 - end

14 Isaiah 45: 6b-8, 18, 21b - end
Luke 7: 18b-23

FIRST CALL

Not this month. Join us instead on December 11 at 7pm for Quiet Christmas



REGULAR SERVICES IN DECEMBER

Sundays 8.30am Holy Communion
10am Parish Communion

Wednesdays 9.30am Holy Communion

Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays
Morning Prayer, when said in church, will be at 9.15.

Second Monday of each month will be set aside for Staff Prayer.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY CLOSURE

The Church will close after the 10am service on Christmas Day and re-open on Sunday January 8 at 8.30am. During this period there will be no midweek services and only a 10am service on Sunday January 1.

SPECIAL SERVICES IN DECEMBER

Sunday December 11 Quiet Christmas at 7pm

Christmas Eve Crib Service at 3pm

EVENTS IN DECEMBER

Sunday December 4 at 12 noon Sunday Lunch Club meets in the Church Hall. This is the Christmas Lunch and needs to be pre-booked.

Tuesday December 13 at 3.30pm Arbury Court Carols and the lighting of the Christmas lights



ADVENT & CHRISTMAS 2016
Come and join us if you can

DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY	PLACE
Sunday December 4	12 noon	Sing Carols with Sunday Lunch Club	Church Hall
Sunday December 11	7pm	Quiet Christmas	Church
Monday December 12	2.30pm	Come and sing carols	Church
Tuesday December 13	3.30pm	Sing Carols	Round tree in Arbury Court
Wednesday December 14	11am	Carols	Buchan House
Sunday December 18	6.30pm	Community Carol Service	Church
Christmas Eve	3pm	Crib service	Church
Christmas Eve	11.30pm	Midnight Eucharist	Church
Christmas Day	10am	All Age Christmas service	Church



THE ENTERING

When I came in
slipping scarce seen
between the heaving beasts
the lamp's shadows
I did not bring
kings' gifts –
gold, frankincense, myrrh
or any precious thing.
Nor could I muster
even a shepherd's offering –
a lamb or simple staff.
My outstretched arms presented
only their emptiness
their faithlessness
their need of love.

I laid them there –
there at the rough manger
before a child whose arms
outstretched in weakness
seemed empty as my own.
Yet as I knelt
before that emptiness
suddenly a strange fulfilling
as if all gifts
were his to give:
as if my arms
were filled with love
my voice with singing
and all around
the shadows parting
to reveal
the light of heaven.

Rex Collinson



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

CHRISTMAS WORDSEARCH (ANSWERS ON PAGE 8)



KINGS' DAY PARTY

"With all the festivities we look forward to over the month of December , it is easy to feel January feels a bit flat. Not this year.

On 7th January between 3pm and 5pm, we will be celebrating Epiphany with a Kings Party. The Epiphany is the climax of all gift giving, because it was on this day the three kings, or Wise Men, brought their gifts to the Christ-Child in Bethlehem.

The party is open to everyone. We would ask, if possible , that you bring a gift of some food to share. Ideally we would like savoury as well as sweet gifts as our party culminates in a celebration party feast. There will be games, singing, eating and, of course, our own "King" for the duration of the party.

If you have any questions about the party, do please find me and ask away.

It would be fantastic to see everyone there."

Paula

MORE STUDENT NEWS

I am David and I am married to lovely Emma. I am currently in my second year of three at Ridley Hall. Before I came to Cambridge to train for ministry, I completed a degree in Computer Games Programming at Teesside University in Middlesbrough. When I am not studying I enjoy playing computer games, running and football. Emma is currently in the 3rd Year of her PhD, when she is not in the lab she enjoys dancing, walking and going to seaside.

Davis Biggs



IN BRIEF

(first published in 2012 in 'TEACH US OF LOVE')

**It's lives reshaped by gifts of grace
That bear the mark of truth and tell
Us more than antique texts about
A fiction threat of endless hell
Unless we calm the wrath of Lord
With blood of beasts. Compassion rules
The heart of God that Christ commends.
His mercy even welcomes fools.**

Henry Disney

WORDS IN WORDSEARCH PUZZLE

ADVENT MARTYR WREATH CANDLE LIGHT FASTING WAITING
HOPE EMMANUEL STAR VIRGIN ASS MANGER ANGEL NIGHT



Christmas greetings from *Phyl and Terry and Melchizedek*



May the good news of Christmas carry you all forward in 2017. As I cope with disabilities, I am ever grateful for the support I receive from members of the Church of the Good Shepherd. Henry Disney



Fiona and Chris Blows would like to wish everyone at the Church of the Good Shepherd a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Peaceful New Year.



"Prayers for a joyful and peaceful Christmas and New Year from Judith, Matt and Simeon"



May the peace of the stable cradle you,
the cacophony of the angels captivate you,
the light of the star clarify you
and the love of the Christ child clothe you
and all those who journey with you this Christmas and in the year to come.

With our love and thanks,
Sean, Rachel, Samuel and Joseph



Christmas Greetings to all who lead our services at the Good Shepherd Church and to all my friends and fellow worshippers there.

Also Greetings to all who read
the Good Shepherd News.
Best wishes to all from
Margaret Handley



May the blessings of the
season fall upon all my friends
at the Good Shepherd
Rhodri



Christmas greetings and a
very happy new year to you all
from
Ann Calliar



Wishing all the blessings of
Christmas to all my friends at
The Good Shepherd
Ruth



With our love and every good
wish for Christmas and the
new year
from Linda and Neville



We hope that you will have a
very joyful and blessed
Christmas and New Year,
Merry Christmas *Dave,*
Hazel, Jude, Zoe & Rosey
Maher



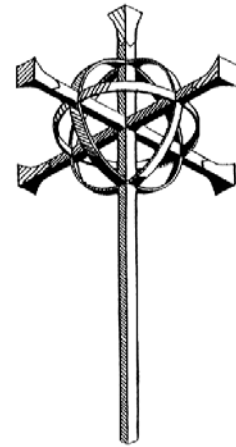
Christmas greetings to all our
Good Shepherd friends from
Rosalind, Philip and all the
Lund/Firth family



IN THE CHURCH HALL (to book call 352151 (evenings))

THE SUNDAY LUNCH CLUB 1 st Sunday of the month noon – 1.30pm	Jinty Keir	572303
RED HEN Monday 8.15 – 11am	Christine O'Reilly	0781 6444439
SANG Monday 10– 11.30 (meets in Haven in Church)	Rachel Blanchflower	523066
THE MONDAY CLUB Monday 2.00 – 3.30pm	Ruby Leyshon	352151
THE GOOD SHEPHERD CUBS Monday 6.30 - 8pm	Charles Brown	07720 441123
DOG TRAINING CLASSES Monday 8.15 - 9.15pm	Susannah O'Hanlon	235281
LINE DANCING Tuesday 10.15 - 11.45am	Deborah Walker	01954 231382
KEEP FIT 50+ GROUP Tuesday 2.30 - 4pm	Margaret Briggs	01954 250870
THE GOOD SHEPHERD RAINBOWS Tuesday 6.15 – 7.15pm	Miss Rachel Marsh	574520
DOG TRAINING CLASSES Tuesday 7.30 - 9.30pm	Susannah O'Hanlon	235281
THE 18th & 25th GOOD SHEPHERD BROWNIES Wednesday 6 - 7.15pm	Mrs Pat Marsh	574520
DOG TRAINING CLASSES Tuesday 7.30 - 9.30pm	Susannah O'Hanlon	235281
YOGA STRETCHING AND MOBILITY Wednesday 9.25-10.15am	Lexi	367639
TAI CHI Wednesday 12.50-1.40	Lexi	367639
ROYAL BRITISH LEGION 3 rd Wednesday of the month 2.30 - 4.30pm January to November	Mr. Gawthrop	351855
UNITE RETIRED MEMBERS' ASSOCIATION 4 th Wednesday of the month 2 – 4pm	Evelyn Hunnyball	364293
THE GOOD SHEPHERD BEAVERS Thursday 6.15 - 7.30pm	Emma Roberts	426043
THE GOOD SHEPHERD SCOUTS Thursday 7.30 – 9.00pm	Chris White	0700 891511
CHURCH TODDLERS' CLUB Friday 9.15 – 11.30am	Claire Duell	0787 4850867
PILATES Friday 12.50 – 1.40pm	Lexi	367639
TAI CHI Friday 2 – 3pm	Mike Tabrett	503390
SIN CRU Friday 5-7.30pm (Term time only)	Lucy Crowe	07989 927706
DOG TRAINING CLASSES Friday 3.13-4.15pm	Arbury Road Vet. Surgery	361911

**Submission date for
January Newsletter:
December 11
(Publication date December 18)**



Vicarage 01223 351844

Church Hall bookings
(evenings) 01223 352151

Newsletter Ruth Banger 07764 613862
OR ruthbanger51@gmail.com

CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Here at the Good Shepherd we like to help you to celebrate and commemorate many of the milestones on the journey through life; these include weddings, anniversaries, funerals, and baptism services.

If you wish to find out more about these, the first step is to contact the Vicar, the Reverend David Maher. He will be able to tell you what is involved and arrange for a meeting with you if you then wish to take things further.

He can be contacted on 01223 351844

Church website: www.churchofthegoodshepherd.co.uk

