



photo John Holdsworth

this  
month  
includes...

January  
2026

Rector's Journal  
New Year  
reflection

Christopher  
Wordsworth  
by Robin

plus  
Concert thanks  
Men's Social  
Messy Church dates  
Baptism of Christ  
Eco notes

## Stranger than fiction...

**Sunday:** I dropped Jesus this morning at the 8.30am service. Easy to do with these flimsy communion wafers, and, I quickly picked Him up again. Although since the next action was to eat Him, it didn't make much logical sense. But there it is, my early training as a curate was over the hill at Christ Church Skipton where dropping the wafers or, worse, spilling the wine, was a serious matter. One retired priest accidentally knocked over a full consecrated chalice, and was inconsolable to the extent that he didn't risk presiding ever again. His reaction (to my protestant mind) was bizarre, but we still serve the wine in silver chalices, at a special table, dressed up in silken robes, and we are very careful to ensure all is consumed and not a crumb is left behind. I can't bring myself to pour surplus wine down a sink, but



can pour it on consecrated ground. Does that make sense? No.

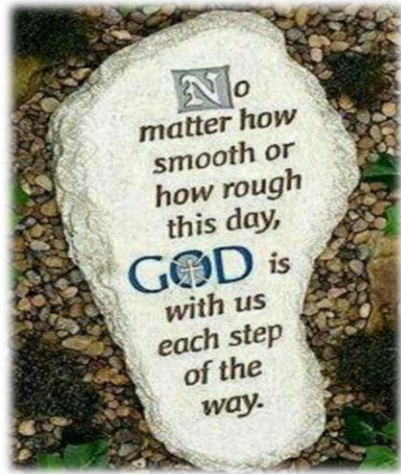
**Tuesday:** I'm in school explaining Christmas, and I have to say, appreciating a very well sung Ding, Dong. The story of Christmas goes down well, and judging by the larger attendances at church this time of year, not just with children. Is the story as illogical and unscientific as my fear of dropping Jesus in a piece of bread? Yes.

John Betjeman linked both in his Advent poem. "Is it true?" he asked. Because if it is, it is more important than any other part of our celebrations.

God becomes man is a mystery which can only be fully received by us in the form of the Christmas story; for ...

see overleaf





cont. from p.1

... such a unique event cannot be measured, compared, or scientifically described. It is still powerful in its truth, and in its reminder that because God came to us in Bethlehem 2000 years ago, He is still with us in the bread and the wine.

Mark

Best wishes for the New Year

**Hymn Writers** part 18 in an occasional series by [Robin Leleux](#)

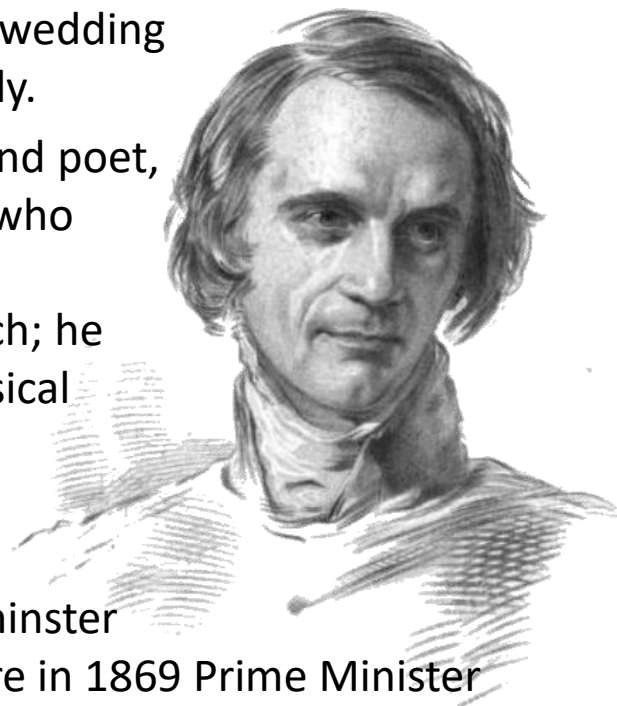
## Christopher Wordsworth (1807 – 1885)

As Christmas morphs into Epiphany a new set of hymns come into play, initially carols which concentrate on the coming of the Three Wise Men, like *We Three Kings* and *The First Noel*, then more broadly celebrating God's appearance as Man in Jesus as He reveals himself to the world at large. This is encapsulated in Christopher Wordsworth's fine hymn ***Songs of thankfulness and praise***: Jesus as Lord is manifested (i.e. made known) by the star bringing the sages, at his baptism at Jordan's stream, as guest at the Cana wedding feast, and in healing both physically and spiritually.

Wordsworth was the nephew of the great Lakeland poet, being the youngest son of the youngest brother who was Master of Trinity, Cambridge. The family was distinguished both academically and in the Church; he himself being a fine **scholar, poet, writer** on classical topography and archaeology as well as being a distinguished **athlete** and taking holy orders.

After eight years as Headmaster of Harrow Prime Minister Peel made him a Canon of Westminster (he rose to be Archdeacon of Westminster) before in 1869 Prime Minister Disraeli made him **Bishop of Lincoln** where he served for sixteen years and is buried in the cathedral.

As well as scholarly works, e.g. his editions of the Greek New Testament (1856-60), and Old Testament (1864-70), he was a **prolific hymn-writer**, four coming down to our hymnbook including at Easter ***Alleluia hearts to heaven*** and at Pentecost ***Gracious Spirit, Holy Ghost***. He was a family man with seven children, some also achieving high office.







The **Christmas Cheer** concert given by the *Fairfax Singers* in December raised £4xx in cash for the **Salvation Army Christmas Appeal** plus donations still to come through our card machine, and the Salvation Army will be able to claim some Gift Aid too to add to the total, so **thank you** to the singers, to all who gave so generously to this appeal, and to Judith and her team who served refreshments.



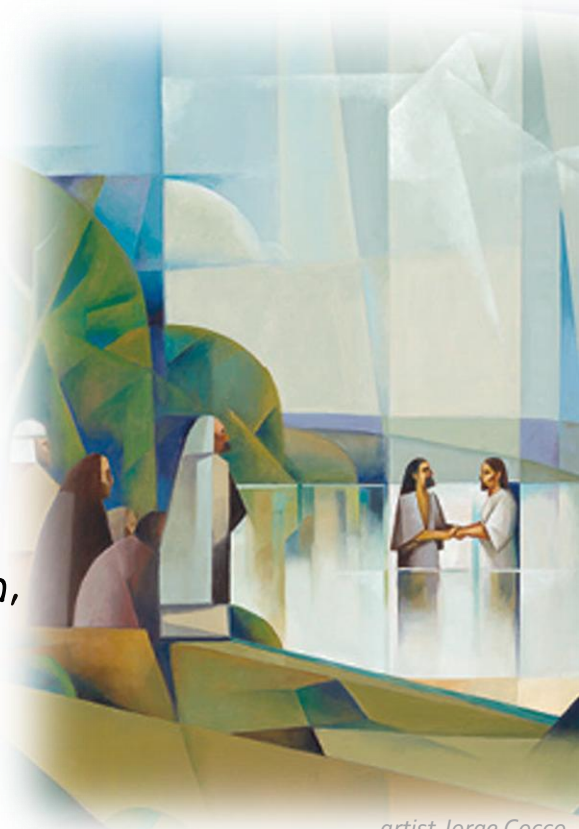
For anyone who couldn't get to church during twilight or darkness hours during December, this is how the Bethlehem Star looked when alight, plus the arch solar lights reminiscent of the shape of a stable entrance. (Thank you to Jeremy and Frank for setting it up.)



## 11<sup>th</sup> January: The Baptism of Christ

*This is the day on which we celebrate the start of Jesus's ministry on earth, the day when through the witness of John the Baptist and the revelation of God, the divine nature of Jesus became apparent. Here is a sonnet written by Malcolm Guite about that occasion.*

Beginning here we glimpse the Three-in-one;  
The river runs, the clouds are torn apart,  
The Father speaks, the Spirit and the Son  
Reveal to us the single loving heart  
That beats behind the being of all things  
And calls and keeps and kindles us to light.  
The dove descends, the spirit soars and sings  
'You are beloved, you are my delight!'  
In that swift light and life, as water spills  
And streams around the Man like quickening rain,  
The voice that made the universe reveals  
The God in Man who makes it new again.  
He calls us too, to step into that river,  
To die and rise and live and love forever.



artist Jorge Cocco

Missing being with your grandchildren after seeing them over Christmas? Why not spend some time with the youngsters in your **church** family? Upcoming dates for **Messy Church** are **11<sup>th</sup> January** and **8<sup>th</sup> February**, at **4pm**. Do come and share in this different way of meeting as family-friendly church.



# Messy Church

fun friendship food

@ St. Peter's

... a different kind of church for families...

**Dates coming up in 2026**  
(all at 4pm)

- Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> January
- Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> February

welcome!

## Wulfherans

Our December meeting was a delicious Christmas meal at the Craven Heifer, which was much enjoyed by all in attendance.

Our next meeting will be:

**An Afternoon Gathering**  
**Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January**  
**2.00pm**



## New Year Reflection

Instead of making a New Year's resolution, consider committing to a biblical solution.

Your promises are easily broken...  
empty words, though earnestly spoken.  
But God's Word transforms the soul,  
by His Holy Spirit making you whole.  
As you spend time alone with Him,  
He will change you from within.

*from Donna Kersey*

## Men's Social

Our next meeting is

**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January from 7.30pm**  
all welcome to join us for a chat in  
**The Fleece** (left hand bar)

## Contacts

**Rector:** Revd Mark Cannon 07866 298 892


**Parish Office:** 01943 830 306


[contact@stpetersaddingham.org.uk](mailto:contact@stpetersaddingham.org.uk)

## Find out more

[www.stpetersaddingham.org.uk](http://www.stpetersaddingham.org.uk)

St Peters Church Addingham

For up-to-date details of all services and activities, please look at our website, follow us on  Facebook or pick up a "What's On" leaflet.

**Everyone is welcome** and you can also join with St. Peter's online; we livestream many of our services to our  Facebook page, so take a look.

You can also follow  **C.a.f.e** – **children and family events at St. Peter's Addingham**

Watch all **St. Peter's monthly Podcasts** via the church website – click **Online**, scroll down to **Podcasts**, then click **Watch on Vimeo**

### From the Registers

#### Funerals

9<sup>th</sup> December Anne D'Arcy

17<sup>th</sup> December Ann Bacon

The Church of England target for all its churches to be **carbon net-zero** by the end of this decade is coming closer! To help meet this challenge, the Diocese of Leeds has recently appointed a Net Zero Church Buildings Officer, whose brief is to work with churches across the region to help them improve their energy efficiency and lower their carbon footprint, to achieve emissions targets.



Eco solutions don't need to be high-tech or wildly expensive – you can increase the cosiness of your own home and help reduce your carbon-footprint at the same time by getting thermally-lined curtains (or adding separate thermal linings to existing curtains) – they keep warmth in during the winter and heat out during the summer!



**Saving Creation**  
Diocese of Leeds

When asked, 'What is more important: prayer or reading the Bible?'  
I ask, 'What is more important: breathing in or breathing out?'

*Charles Spurgeon*