

*The Herald*

50p

**THE HOLLY**



**& THE IVY**

December 2024

# Reservoir Group of Churches



The Parish of  
St Margaret, Downham with  
St Peter, South Hanningfield and  
St Mary the Virgin, Ramsden Bellhouse

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## Ministry Team

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The Herald is published monthly by the Parochial Church Council of Downham with South Hanningfield and Ramsden Bellhouse. Registered charity no: 1209033. Views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Parochial Church Council.

The Herald is on sale in St Margaret's, St Mary's and St Peter's at 50p per copy. Alternatively you may purchase an annual subscription for £5.00. If you wish The Herald to be delivered to you please contact Robert Andrews on 01268 733817 or email [distribution.theherald@downhamchurch.org.uk](mailto:distribution.theherald@downhamchurch.org.uk)

# What's on when and where

## Sunday 1 December - Advent 1

10.00am St Peter's South Hanningfield Holy Communion

11.00am St Margaret's Downham Family Service

Note: No service at Ramsden Bellhouse

## Sunday 8 December - Advent 2

10.00am St Mary's Ramsden Bellhouse Morning Prayer

11.00am St Margaret's Downham Sung Eucharist

Note: No service at South Hanningfield

## Sunday 15 December - Advent 3

11.00am St Margaret's Downham Group Holy Communion

3.00pm St Peter's South Hanningfield Carol Service

Note: No service at Ramsden Bellhouse

## Thursday 19 December

7.30pm St Mary's Ramsden Bellhouse Carol Service

## Sunday 22 December - Advent 4

10.00am St Mary's Ramsden Bellhouse Holy Communion

11.00am St Margaret's Downham Sung Eucharist

Note: No service at South Hanningfield

## Tuesday 24 December - Christmas Eve

3.00pm St Margaret's Downham Christingle Service

9.30pm St Mary's Ramsden Bellhouse Holy Communion

9.30pm St Peter's South Hanningfield Holy Communion

11.30pm St Margaret's Downham Midnight Mass

## Wednesday 25 December - Christmas Day

10.00am St Margaret's Downham Holy Communion

## Sunday 29 December - Christmas 1

10.00am St Peter's South Hanningfield Group Holy Communion

Note: No services at Downham or Ramsden Bellhouse

## Sunday 5 January - Epiphany

10.00am St Peter's South Hanningfield Holy Communion

11.00am St Margaret's Downham Family Service

Note: No service at Ramsden Bellhouse

**St Margaret's Church**  
**Christmas**  
**Bazaar**



To be held in

**Downham Village Hall**  
School Road, Downham CM11 1QN

**Saturday**  
**7 December**

**11.00am to 3.00pm**

Stalls, games, refreshments  
The place to buy your Christmas gifts



Come and meet  
Father Christmas

The Churches of  
**St Margaret Downham with St Peter South Hanningfield  
and St Mary Ramsden Bellhouse**

wish you  
a Happy and Blessed Christmas



We invite you to join one or more of our Christmas celebrations

**Sunday 15 December - Advent 3**

|         |                    |                |
|---------|--------------------|----------------|
| 11.00am | Downham            | Holy Communion |
| 3.00pm  | South Hanningfield | Carol Service  |

**Thursday 19 December**

|        |                   |               |
|--------|-------------------|---------------|
| 7.30pm | Ramsden Bellhouse | Carol Service |
|--------|-------------------|---------------|

**Sunday 22 December - Advent 4**

|         |                   |                         |
|---------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 10.00am | Ramsden Bellhouse | Holy Communion          |
| 11.00am | Downham           | Holy Communion & Carols |

**Tuesday 24 December - Christmas Eve**

|         |                    |                              |
|---------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| 3.00pm  | Downham            | Crib and Christingle Service |
| 9.30pm  | Ramsden Bellhouse  | Christmas Eve Communion      |
| 9.30pm  | South Hanningfield | Christmas Eve Communion      |
| 11.30pm | Downham            | Midnight Mass                |

**Wednesday 25 December - Christmas Day**

|         |         |                     |
|---------|---------|---------------------|
| 10.00am | Downham | Christmas Communion |
|---------|---------|---------------------|

**Sunday 29 December - Christmas 1**

|         |                    |                |
|---------|--------------------|----------------|
| 10.00am | South Hanningfield | Holy Communion |
|---------|--------------------|----------------|



## From the ministry team

### In the Bleak Midwinter

Which is your favourite Christmas carol? Silent Night, perhaps? Or Away in the Manger? O Little Town of Bethlehem?



I can find it difficult to choose just one favourite, but a carol that I always find quite emotional to sing is 'In the Bleak Midwinter'. It is a poem by Christina Rossetti that was later put to music, and it beautifully captures, for me, the joy and the hope of Christmas - especially the second verse:

*Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him  
Nor earth sustain  
Heaven and earth shall flee away  
When He comes to reign  
In the bleak mid-winter  
A stable-place sufficed  
Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ*

The world can feel very bleak at times - not least because of the dark, cold weather, but because of events going on in the world, in our lives, or in the lives of our family and friends. Christmas lights, festivities, presents, and food are a welcomed tonic to the dark and the cold of this time of year (bring on the mulled wine and the minced pies!) but they are fleeting. January will come.

Yet what Christina Rossetti describes in her poem is a gift of light, of hope, of love, that transcends everything else and is unending. Jesus, the Son of God, the creator of the world, of the universe, chose to become a small, vulnerable

baby, in a land under Roman occupation. A simple stable housed the Lord God Almighty.

Why? So that we might know God, and know his love for us. No matter how bleak the winter may be (or indeed how bright the winter sunshine); God's love is unfailing and unending.

So as we celebrate in church, in our homes - as we sing carols in the pub, the barn, around the Christmas tree - however and wherever you celebrate Christmas this year, may you know the gift of God's presence with you and his love for you.

How might we respond to this gift? Christina Rossetti answers this beautifully in her carol as well:

*What can I give Him  
Poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would give a lamb  
If I were a wise man, I would do my part  
Yet what I can, I give Him  
Give my heart*

Merry Christmas

*Jacqui*

## **Christmas throughout the Christian world**

For nearly four weeks leading up to Christmas Christians recognise a period called Advent. It means 'coming'. It is a time of spiritual preparation. 'Coming' refers to Jesus' first coming as a baby, but it also looks forward to a day when Jesus is expected to return in triumph at his 'second coming' to establish perfect justice and a new order of peace.

Originally Christians marked Advent as a time when they refrained from excessive eating and drinking. Then Christmas Day reintroduced them to the joys of feasting. Christmas celebrations lasted for twelve days, with gifts exchanged as a climax at Epiphany (6 January). Today, however, Advent is more likely to be associated with accelerating festivity, with the days following Christmas something of an anti-climax until 'twelfth night', on which decorations are removed. Many Christians worldwide are trying to revive the spirit of Advent by setting aside time to pray and address global poverty.

Christmas Day is celebrated as the anniversary of Jesus' birth, although the actual date is not known. Most Christians celebrate it on 25 December. However, the Orthodox Church (the ancient churches in Eastern Europe



and parts of Asia) follows a different calendar and celebrates on 7 January. Christians make a point of taking communion on Christmas Day. Many make it the first thing they do as the clock strikes midnight.

On 6 January the Christmas festival continues with a celebration of Epiphany, which means 'the appearance'. Christians remember the visit of wise men (magi) to Jesus, bringing gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. The Christmas tradition of exchanging gifts originally honoured these men, who were the first non-Jews (Gentiles) to worship Jesus. It forms a reminder that in Jesus God was giving Himself for the benefit of the entire world.

Orthodox Christians use this day to recall the baptism of Jesus as a grown man. The significance of Jesus being baptised was that He identified Himself with human beings in all their need. They mark the day by praying for God's blessing on rivers, wells and water sources.

Christmas has never been just an escapist festival for Christians. Those who treat it seriously recognise that not all the world is able to face the days with frivolity or joy. The day after Christmas, Boxing Day, was historically marked as the feast of St Stephen. He was the first man to be put to death rather than give up his belief that Jesus was God. And two days later a day remembering the Massacre of the Innocents recalls Herod's attempt to destroy Jesus by killing all male babies in Bethlehem. Although not so widely marked as Christmas Day, it gives Christians the opportunity to pray for children in today's world who suffer as a result of the actions of adults.

## **From the registers**

### **Ramsden Bellhouse Burial of Ashes**

3 November David Mercer

## **St Margaret's Downham**

### **Harvest gifts**

Thank you to everyone who gave harvest gifts, both at Downham and at South Hanningfield.

Below is a letter of thanks we have received from the foodbank.

*I am writing on behalf of the Wickford Foodbank to say "thank you" for the harvest donations dropped to the Salvation Army Hall in Jersey Gardens this week. We are very appreciative for the ongoing support from your church and community, and we are sorting donations received at the moment so that*

*these can be passed on to guests at Wickford Foodbank.  
Good wishes and blessings to you.  
Kind regards*

*Barbara Church  
Community Assistant  
Wickford Foodbank at The Salvation Army*



## **Remembrance Sunday**

About 50 people attended our Remembrance Sunday service at the war memorial outside the church.



## **Christmas Bazaar**

Hopefully you will receive this edition of *The Herald* before our Christmas Bazaar which this year is being held in **Downham Village Hall** instead of the church, on Saturday 7 December (see details on page 3). Father Christmas has the date in his diary and will be paying us a visit with small gifts for the children. There will be a variety of stalls where you can buy those last minute Christmas gifts. We hope to see you there.

## **Christingle service**

Our Christingle service will be held on Christmas Eve at 3.00pm. This is usually a popular event so we encourage you to arrive early. Although it is aimed mainly at children and their families, all are welcome. The collection taken at this service will be donated to The Children's Society.

## **Other Christmas services**

We will be welcoming Christmas at 11.30pm on Christmas Eve with our traditional Midnight Mass and we hope to see you there. If midnight is a little late for you, St Peter's and St Mary's both have Christmas Eve communion services commencing at 9.30pm.

On Christmas morning there will be a simple service of Holy Communion at 10.00am.

## **Downham WI**

Our poppy display in Jubilee Gardens was once again very much appreciated and I would like to thank everyone for their kind comments. The WI ladies had to replenish some poppies, which were blown away last year and it is nice that their hard work is appreciated by the local residents.

We have been rather unfortunate with our speakers this year with a number having to cancel due to ill health. Some of our ladies stepped up at the last minute and we were treated to a variety of talks from flower arrangements on pedestals to 3D embroidery. A big thank you to them.

We are looking forward to our Christmas lunch this year and have treated ourselves to an outside catering company. The entertainment will be provided by a choir singing festive songs to get us into the Christmas spirit.

Our Tuesday club will finish on 3 December for the year and re-start on 7 January 2025.

Our members' meeting will start on 21 January and we will be having soup and French bread to start the year on a warm note.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

From Downham WI

*Wendy*

# St Mary's Ramsden Bellhouse

## Remembrance Sunday

Our Remembrance Service at the Village Hall was led by the Revd Jean Andrews and was attended by our Baptist Church, St Mary's and the Villagers. Our collection in aid of BLESMA (The Limbless Veterans) amounted to £300. Our thanks to everyone for putting the chairs out and for those who helped in the kitchen.

## Christmas services

We have our traditional service of Nine Lessons with Carols on Thursday 19 December, starting at 7.30pm

On Christmas Eve, our service of Holy Communion will commence at 9.30pm. You can find details of all the other Christmas Services within the Downham group of churches on page 4.

*Audrey Pegrum* MBE

## Community Cuppa & Cake afternoon

Ramsden Heath Village Hall  
Dowsetts Lane CM11 1HX

**Tuesday 3 December 1.45 to 4.00pm**

Our Coffee Mornings are usually held on the second Tuesday of the month but our next one is a **week earlier on Tuesday 3 December** as we are being joined by the Downham School Choir. For those who will be coming along we will start a bit earlier at 1.45pm as the children are coming at 2.30pm. Everyone is welcome to join us for a cuppa for 50p and homemade cake £1.50.

Our November meeting was packed and we managed to raise £200 for the Poppy Appeal. Thank you to all those who came along and made that amount possible.

To add to your next year's diaries. See the dates below for 2025:

|            |             |             |
|------------|-------------|-------------|
| 14 January | 11 February | 11 March    |
| 8 April    | 13 May      | 10 June     |
| 8 July     | 12 August   | 9 September |
| 14 October | 11 November | 2 December  |

*Ramsden Cupcakes*

## **Ramsden Heath Social Club**

Our regular monthly BINGO will be on Friday 6 December at 8.00pm. Only £1.00 to play plus £2.00 for each book you want to play. All ages welcome.

FREE tea & coffee at the half-time break, but please feel free to bring other drinks/snacks of your own.

Our final event of 2024 is our CHRISTMAS GIVEAWAY/MINCE PIES/ MULLED WINE NIGHT on Friday 20 December at 8.00pm.

Come & enjoy some Mulled Wine and a Mince Pie or two and take part in the festive games with lots of prizes to be won throughout the evening.

Entry is just £5 per person but places need to be booked in advance via the contacts below.

Please feel free to bring other drinks & snacks of your own.

All our events take place in Ramsden Heath Village Hall, Dowsetts Lane.

For more information please contact:

Dave Quinney on 07950 309524 or Dave Charlton on 07940 540819

## **Ramsden Heath Horticultural & Allotment Society**

Our monthly meeting on 7 November was due to be a talk by Tom Cole on vertical gardening. Unfortunately, Tom was called away to a family emergency on the day of our meeting. Despite many unsuccessful attempts at finding a speaker at such short notice, we were left to entertain ourselves. Hopefully, Tom will be able to join us another time. None of this concerned our members who were quite happy to have a social chat amongst themselves. Rita Elcock was kept busy completing her list of members' choices of what to cook or buy for the Christmas party.

Now on to the highlight of our year, the Christmas party. This will be held on Thursday 5 December at Ramsden Heath Village Hall. The hall will be open at 7.00pm for members to bring their contributions for the meal which will start at 7.30pm.

The price for the evening is £15 per person (members only) and if you haven't yet ordered your tickets, please telephone Trevor Elcock on 01268 733283, or email [t.elcock@talktalk.net](mailto:t.elcock@talktalk.net)

We look forward to another fun evening with lots of good food and drink and a glass of punch to welcome us in. Please bring your own choice of liquid refreshment, and a glass to drink it from. This year we are being entertained by a group of singers called 'The Ladybirds' who will hopefully get everyone singing along with the music.

The first meeting of 2025 will be on Thursday 2 January This will be our usual social get together and 'Bring and Buy' sale, a chance to offload some of those unwanted items cluttering up your cupboards – and then go home with something else.



On behalf of Ramsden Heath Horticultural Society we would like to wish all Herald readers a very merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and peaceful 2025.



**Join us on the South Hanningfield Tye and in the Village Hall on 22nd December 4 - 7pm**



**The Maldon Grinch will be trying to steal Christmas**



**the Rayleigh Brass Band will be playing carols**



**There will be hot drinks and mince pies  
All donations to go to St Peter's Church**





# St Peter's South Hanningfield

## Looking forward to Christmas

A reminder that we will be holding our Christmas Carol Service in church on Sunday 15 December at 3.00pm. We are breaking away from the traditional nine lessons this year. There will still be bible readings telling the story of Christmas, but these will be read in modern English, and they will be interspersed with readings about Christmas from literature. Of course there will still be a good selection of familiar carols for everyone to sing along to. Afterwards Christmas refreshments will be served. We hope you will come and join us.

Our other Christmas service will be our Holy Communion service at 9.30pm on Christmas Eve. Please do come early and join us in a glass of mulled wine before the service starts.

There are five Sundays in December this year, so we will be hosting the Downham Group Holy Communion service at 10.00am on Sunday 29 December.

## South Hanningfield Village Hall

**Funding success:** We have had confirmation from Tesco Stronger Starts Blue Tokens Scheme that we will be awarded second place voting with funding of £1,000 which will go towards the replacement of the rear external cladding to the hall. Thank you to all those who supported us by putting the blue tokens in the South Hanningfield Village Hall box!

Thank you to everyone who came to our recent Race Night at the hall



Our grateful thanks to 'On Course' Race Nights who provided a great evening of entertainment. We are also very grateful to the business sponsors of six races: J Gard & Sons Ltd, BFS Fuel Services, DCL Auto Performance Tuning, Pronto Training, Coral Romford Greyhound Stadium (who also provided tickets for the stadium which were also sold off separately) and St George's Pest Control Ltd. We raised nearly £700 which was a fantastic achievement and will go into the upkeep of the village hall.

In December, there will be carols on the Tye by the Christmas tree and the village hall will be hosting a further festive event which will take place on Saturday, 22 December from 4.00pm to 7.00pm. The free entry event will have entertainment provided by Rayleigh Brass Band and the Maldon Grinch who will be in attendance to spread some festive cheer! There will be hot drinks and mince pies. The event is sponsored by the National Lottery Community Fund and all donations will go to St Peter's church. We look forward to seeing you there.

### **Dates for your diary 2025:**

**Charity Ball** Fundraising Ball at Stockbrook Manor on the evening of Saturday, 25 January. After the success of last year's event, bookings are being taken for another event! £80 per person Posh Evening Frocks and Dinner Jackets. Proceeds to South Hanningfield Village Hall and St Peter's church. Tables of 8-10 and cost includes pre-dinner drinks reception, after dinner all-inclusive evening bar including house spirits, wines, beers, lagers & soft drinks; 4 Course Luxury Dinner Menu including wine, beers and soft drinks; DJ entertainment, Raffle. For more information and to book, call Emma on 07961 963914.

**St Patrick's Ceilidh** We are planning a Ceilidh Dance on Saturday, 15 March, doors will open from 7.00pm. The Yardarm Ceilidh Band will be in attendance, with a caller to show dancers the steps to the music. Tickets cost £8 per person and there will also be a Raffle. For further information and to book, email [vallisc@aol.com](mailto:vallisc@aol.com) or phone 07891 653238.

**South Hanningfield Summer Show** on Saturday, 12 July from 12.00noon to 6.00pm. After last year's successful show, our committee decided to have a Summer Show biannually as a lot of hard work goes into organising an outside community event like this. In 2025, it will be the 40th Anniversary year of the rebuilding of South Hanningfield Village Hall so there will be even more reason for a celebration and bringing the local community together. This Free Entry village event will be outside either on the tye green (by kind permission of South Hanningfield Parish Council) or in the field beside the village hall by kind permission of the landowner. The village hall will also be open to showcase its use on that day. There will be local entertainment as well as various crafts,

traders, community stalls, children's activities and food and drinks stalls. If anyone would like a stall space, please let Clive know on email [vallisc@aol.com](mailto:vallisc@aol.com) or phone 07891 653238. Further details of the Summer Show will be in future editions of the Herald.

**No Parking on Pavement by Hall** South Hanningfield Village Hall Management Committee requests that vehicles don't park up on the pavement outside the village hall because of the health and safety risks. Neighbouring residents will have seen hi vis volunteers outside the hall supervising parking at our own fundraising events. Unfortunately, recently there have been some private party/events hirers of the hall who have allowed some of their attendees to park on the pavement even though on the booking form that they signed they have agreed that once the car park is full, they park on the street down Middlemead. The committee have put up signage as well as other measures to stop this from happening. Please alert the volunteer committee if you see such vehicles parked in this way outside the hall on 07891 653238.

### **Mobile Library**

The Mobile Library visit South Hanningfield Village Hall every three weeks.

Day of visit: Tuesday Time of visit: 12.25pm to 12.55pm

Next visit dates are 26 November and 17 December.

### **Regular Activities**

#### **Coffee Morning**

Second Wednesday of each month from 10.30am – 12.30pm

Wednesday, 11 December. This will be a special Christmas Coffee Morning which has been sponsored by South Hanningfield Parish Council so lots of festive food and drinks to celebrate Christmas.

Please call the listed contacts below to book a place.

#### **Pilates & Keep Fit**

Monday 9.45am – 10.45am

Thursday 10.30am – 11.30am

Contact Hayley on 07758 427379

#### **Strollercise Dance**

Monday 11.15am – 12.15pm

Tel: 07952791183

Email: [lynne.strawford@sky.com](mailto:lynne.strawford@sky.com)

No booking is required, just turn up.

## **Puppy Dog Training Classes**

Monday from 6pm and 7pm

Dog training for puppies of all ages

Contact Rachel on 07484 706085 or email

[Rachel@PuppyPotentialDogTraining.co.uk](mailto:Rachel@PuppyPotentialDogTraining.co.uk)

## **\*\*NEW\*\* Karate and Kick Boxing**

Tuesday evenings:

5.30pm Children's Karate

6.30pm Advanced Children's Karate

7.30pm Senior Karate

7.30pm Kick Boxing

Free first classes at all sessions

Phone number to contact for Leah and Richard is 07934 213010

## **1-1 Ballroom and Latin lessons and wedding dance lessons**

Available with Callie every Wednesday afternoon and evening from 3.00pm £30 for a 45-minute lesson. Please contact Callie on 07885 630241

## **Yoga and Zumba Thursday night**

Zumba 6.30pm to 7.20pm and Vinyasa Flow Yoga 7.30pm to 8.30pm.  
Pay as you go.

Tel: Charlene on 07772 443028 or email [info@sakurayogastudios.co.uk](mailto:info@sakurayogastudios.co.uk)

## **Upholstery Class**

Friday morning 9.30am – 1.00pm

Contact Fiona on 01621 776586 or 07887 507208

## **Zumba Saturday mornings**

Zumba 9.20am to 10.20am Pay as you go

Tel: Charlene on 07772 443028 or email [info@sakurayogastudios.co.uk](mailto:info@sakurayogastudios.co.uk)

If you would like to book the South Hanningfield Village Hall for any regular activities or events, please call Sandra Graves, our Bookings Secretary on 07396 546050 or email [shvhall@gmail.com](mailto:shvhall@gmail.com) to check availability and prices.

Please continue to support our local village hall and if there are any other ways you can help us, let us know. Please contact the Chairman, Clive Vallis for further information on 07891 653238.

Website <https://e-voice.org.uk/shanningfieldvillagehall>

Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/southhanningfieldvillagehall>

**Happy Christmas from the  
South Hanningfield Village Hall Management Committee**

## **Iconic Bethlehem Carol Sheet celebrates 70 years in print**

*If you attend one of our carol services at St Peter's or St Mary's you will be handed a copy of the Bethlehem Carol Sheet containing the words of the carols we will be using. What is the history of this publication?*

It was back in 1954 when the charity, BibleLands Mission Aid Society, first tentatively decided to print a colourful compilation of popular Christmas carols, alongside images of some of the people BibleLands served.

From the start, the scheme was an immense success. The carol sheets were so popular that even that first year, 100,000 copies were insufficient to meet the demand of schools, churches, British army bases at home and abroad and Royal Navy ships across the world. The donations appeal towards the BibleLands projects in the carol sheet also raised hundreds of pounds.

When 500,000 copies were quickly sold in 1955, BibleLands knew it had a winner on its hands.

So it was that, in 1956, with 1.5 million carol sheets sales as the target, an accompanying catalogue of Christmas cards and gifts and prayers for God's favour was also launched. The plan was overwhelmingly successful – much needed funds were raised for the work of BibleLands.

Since then, many millions of carol sheets have been sold, until this year the charity, now renamed Embrace the Middle East, has produced a new-look Edition with 27 popular carols, including three new additions for this year: O Holy Night, See Him Lying on a Bed of Straw (Calypso Carol) and The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came.

*Note: We purchased new copies last year, so it won't be the new look edition we will be using.*

# Children's pages



**Mouse Makes**

"The child to be born  
will be called  
H \_\_\_\_\_, the  
\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_"  
*Luke 1:35*

## THE GREATEST GIFT

"She will bear a son,  
and shall call his name

\_\_\_\_\_ for he will save his  
people from their sins."  
*Matthew 1:21*

"Jesus said,  
I am the \_\_\_\_\_ Y  
and the \_\_\_\_\_ U  
and the \_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_.  
No one comes to the Father  
except through me."  
*John 14:6*

"For unto you is born  
this day a  
S \_\_\_\_\_  
who is  
\_\_\_\_\_ R \_\_\_\_\_  
the \_\_\_\_\_ R \_\_\_\_\_"  
*Luke 2:11*

"Jesus said,  
I am the

\_\_\_\_\_ and the life."  
*John 11:25*

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

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

**JESUS**  
THE  
GREATEST  
GIFT  
OF ALL!

P R O P H E T I  
R E D E E M E R  
I E M I L I G  
E M E S S I A H  
S R M E G F T  
T E A C H E R E

E V E R L A S T I N G  
K I N G O F K I N G S  
I N K I G W F D O U  
S E S O N O F G O D D  
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Find the words from the Bible verses too!

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# Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Luke chapter 2 verses 1-7

The Roman Empire charged the countries it had invaded taxes, based on the number of people and what they earned.

Emperor Augustus gave orders that all people in the Empire were to be registered so they could be taxed.



This census was before Quirinius became Governor of Syria\* (\*whose own census started riots - Acts 5:37)



When the order came, Mary and Joseph were living in Nazareth.

But Joseph was descended from King David, who had been born in Bethlehem...



so Joseph took Mary to Bethlehem to stay with his family.

Come and meet everyone!



A normal home in Bethlehem.



While they were staying there, Mary's baby was born.

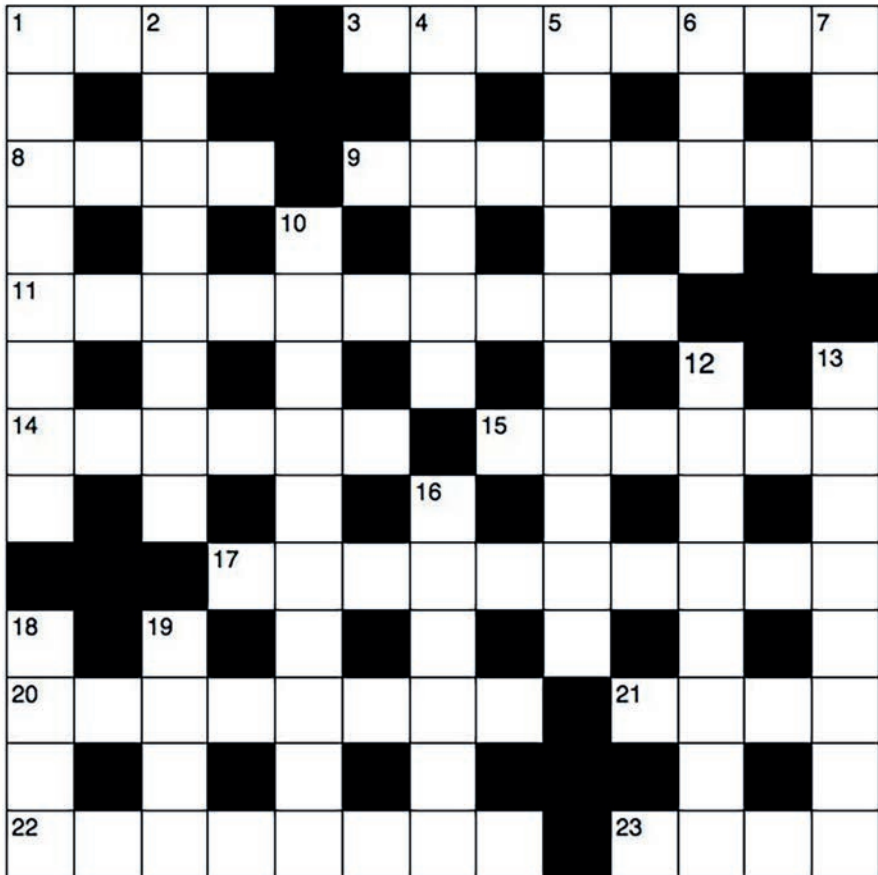


There was no space in the guest room to put a new baby!

So they made a snug bed for Jesus in one of the mangers.



## Puzzle corner



### Across

- 1 'The blind receive sight, the — walk' (Luke 7:22) (4)
- 3 Got (Philippians 3:12) (8)
- 8 Leave out (Jeremiah 26:2) (4)
- 9 Castigated for using dishonest scales (Hosea 12:7) (8)
- 11 Weighty (1 John 5:3) (10)
- 14 'Now the serpent was more — than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made' (Genesis 3:1) (6)

- 15 'Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot — God' (Romans 8:8) (6)
- 17 Because Israel lacked one of these, tools had to be sharpened by the Philistines (1 Samuel 13:19) (10)
- 20 In his vision of the two eagles and the vine, this is how Ezekiel described the latter (Ezekiel 17:8) (8)
- 21 Rite (anag.) (4)
- 22 Nine gigs (anag.) (8)
- 23 'The eye cannot say to the — , "I don't need you"' (1 Corinthians 12:21) (4)

### Down

- 1 'Flee for your lives! Don't — — , and don't stop anywhere in the plain!' (Genesis 19:17) (4,4)
- 2 Principal thoroughfare (Numbers 20:19) (4,4)
- 4 'The tax collector... beat his — and said, "God have mercy on me, a sinner"' (Luke 18:13) (6)
- 5 'The zeal of the Lord Almighty will — this' (2 Kings 19:31) (10)
- 6 'The day of the Lord is — for all nations' (Obadiah 15) (4)
- 7 Specified day (Acts 21:26) (4)
- 10 Deadly epidemic (Deuteronomy 32:24) (10)
- 12 Roman Catholic church which has special ceremonial rights (8)
- 13 Tied up (2 Kings 7:10) (8)
- 16 In his speech to the Sanhedrin, Stephen described Moses as 'powerful in speech and — ' (Acts 7:22) (6)
- 18 'Although he did not remove the high places, — heart was fully committed to the Lord all his life' (1 Kings 15:14) (4)
- 19 Tribe (Deuteronomy 29:18) (4)

### Answers on page 33

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The real art of conversation is not only to say the right thing at the right time, but also to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment



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Look out for our new website: [www.ramsdenheath.org.uk](http://www.ramsdenheath.org.uk)

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## Smile lines



### The Everlasting Turkey

On the first day of Christmas my true love said to me  
I've bought a big fresh turkey and a proper Christmas tree.  
On the second day of Christmas much laughter could be heard  
As we tucked into our turkey – a most delicious bird.  
On the third day of Christmas people came from just next door,  
The turkey tasted just as good as it had done before.  
On the fourth day of Christmas came relations young and old  
We finished up the Christmas pud and had the turkey cold.  
On the fifth day of Christmas, outside the snowflakes scurried,  
But we were nice and warm inside, and had the turkey curried.  
On the sixth day of Christmas, the Christmas spirit died.  
The children fought and bickered – we had the turkey rissoles fried.  
On the seventh day of Christmas my true love he did wince  
When he sat down at table - and was offered turkey mince.  
On the eighth day of Christmas, the dog had run for shelter,  
For he'd seen our turkey pancakes and the glass of alka-seltzer.  
On the ninth day of Christmas, by lunchtime dad was blotto,  
He knew that bird was back again, this time as a risotto.  
On the tenth day of Christmas we were drinking home-made brew,  
Anything to help us face that steaming turkey stew.  
On the eleventh day of Christmas our lovely tree was moulting,  
And with chilli, soy and oyster sauce, the turkey was revolting.  
On the twelfth day of Christmas we had smiles back on our lips,  
The guests had gone, the turkey too  
– WE DINED ON FISH AND CHIPS

# Contacting The Herald

## Contributions to the January 2025 edition

Copy for the next edition of The Herald should be sent by email to Robert Andrews at [theherald@downhamchurch.org.uk](mailto:theherald@downhamchurch.org.uk) by **Thursday 12 December**. Please send files in .doc, .docx or .rtf format. Because we wish to maintain a common house style please keep any formatting to an absolute minimum and do not embed photographs or other artwork. If you wish to include photographs or other artwork they should be sent separately in .jpeg or .pdf format. If you are unable to use email or are unsure about file types please telephone Robert on 01268 733817, but be aware that the telephone line has BT Call Guardian installed to deter nuisance callers, therefore you may have to announce your name and press the # key in order to be put through.

## Advertising in The Herald

All general enquiries about advertising should be addressed to Mike Roome on 07770 795388 or email [advert.theherald@downhamchurch.org.uk](mailto:advert.theherald@downhamchurch.org.uk)

Advertising rates are currently:

|              |                        |
|--------------|------------------------|
| Full page    | £100 for 12 insertions |
| Half page    | £60 for 12 insertions  |
| Quarter page | £40 for 12 insertions  |

We will accept one off or limited run insertions on a pro rata basis

If you have existing artwork your advertisements should be emailed to [advert.theherald@downhamchurch.org.uk](mailto:advert.theherald@downhamchurch.org.uk) preferably in .jpeg or .pdf format. If you wish us to produce artwork for you this can be arranged for a small one-off fee.

## Answers to the Crossword puzzle

**ACROSS:** 1, Lame. 3, Obtained. 8, Omit. 9, Merchant. 11, Burdensome. 14, Crafty. 15, Please. 17, Blacksmith. 20, Splendid. 21, Tier. 22, Singeing. 23, Hand.

**DOWN:** 1, Look back. 2, Main road. 4, Breast. 5, Accomplish. 6, Near. 7, Date. 10, Pestilence. 12, Basilica. 13, Tethered. 16, Action. 18, Asa's. 19, Clan.

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