

View from the Manse

Happy New Year! We begin worship in the New Year with a service on the first day of Epiphany, the 6th of January, in which we remember the arrival of the wise men who followed a star in the sky and came to see the baby Jesus, born to be king of the Jews.

This is a moment in the Church Calendar when we are reminded of the significant truth that the incarnation of our Lord was revealed to Gentiles and foreigners as well as the Israelites. In other words, the gospel or good news of God's coming among us, was not only for one culture or time period, but for all people everywhere.

The whole of this Epiphany season is a season of manifestation, the showing or revealing of the anointed one: Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah, the saviour of the world.

This is good news for us to enjoy and to share with others. Where there is darkness and despair, we know that God is not far

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away, but has come beside us and longs to bring the light of his presence into all situations.

Our world is an unpredictable place, with an uncertain future full of political polarisations and divisions, social inequity and need. Yet, because God was with us in Jesus Christ, we have the assurance that God is aware of all that is going on, and behind the scenes, is working his purposes out ultimately to bring justice and peace.

We as a church may then have confidence that God will guide us into the coming year to lead us forward to play our part in his mission and ministry.

One of my favourite verses of Scripture is Jeremiah 29.11 *'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'* We may not know the future, but we know who holds the future in his hands and we know his purposes are for good.

May this be true for you and yours, and for all of us as a church congregation as we look forward to the development of new ministries and forms of service and in the maintenance of our faithful witness to Christ's love in this town throughout the coming year.

With love and every blessing for the New Year!

Catherine

COSI WINTER CONCERT

Saturday January 9th, 6pm

Free Church, St Ives
£8 adults, £5 children
Available from Just Sharing in the Free Church
 Enquiries email: felicitycello@gmail.com





Oboe Soloist - Alex Fryer

Respighi - Ancient Airs and Dances, 2nd suite
 Martinu - Concerto for oboe and small orchestra
 Beethoven - Symphony no 7 in A major

News From Traidcraft

Traidcraft goes back to the future with a new pioneering plan for ethical trade.

The Board of Traidcraft has accepted a plan for the future of the plc which has room for 12 employees and will begin its work at the start of 2019. It will maximise the profitable parts of the business, phase out loss-making lines, create a membership culture and set a new high bar for ethical trading in the UK.

As such, Traidcraft wishes to build on the extraordinary success of fair trade for a new generation of trading, sourcing and buying, in the manner of its pioneering fair trade founders. At its heart is an aspiration to make transparent the costs, prices and profits involved in every product it sells, which carries on the fair trade tradition of challenging and disrupting the market.

CEO Robin Roth said: “We want our members to be co-conspirators in changing how trade is understood and practiced. We want to tell consumers who gets what from the Traidcraft products they buy. We want to annoy and irritate those who profit unduly through the non-transparency of their trading activities. We will cause good trouble, just as those six fair trade pioneers who started Traidcraft did back in 1979.”

“Traidcraft has transformed shopping in the UK, and now you can find fair trade everywhere, from online shops to petrol stations. But as times change, so must we. When new markets are searching for goods that are ethical, vegan and organic as well as fair trade, we need to be there. As younger people demand cooperative models of doing business, we need to strive for that too.”

Traidcraft will initially focus more deliberately on its established partners and advocates, who are predominantly active in Christian churches. Traidcraft’s 4,300 Fair Traders, 85% of whom are motivated by faith, will be able to access a new version of the company they already do business with. Further to this, products will be available to all consumers through the online Traidcraft shop and by mail order.

Returning the business to profit will involve a simpler range of products. The new Traidcraft will:

- establish core grocery lines
- carry fewer craft lines
- encourage communities to buy cooperatively and in bulk, saving on packaging and benefitting the planet deliver discounts through a membership model for supporters.

All of Traidcraft’s 67 members of staff have faced redundancy through the legal consultation process; 22 of whom chose voluntary redundancy, and a further 45 were issued notices of redundancy. There will be 12 roles available within the future plan for the organisation, which all staff will be welcome to apply for. Around 10 additional members of staff will remain on an extended contract for a transitional period.

Mary Cox

FROM THE CHURCH SECRETARY

Ice, frozen waterfalls and snow are associated with January. This winter I travelled to Iceland and experienced wintertime as never before. I have come back joyful that we are an eco-friendly church as I came to appreciate the adverse impacts of global warming and the effort that we all need to put into slowing the decline. We had made a quick decision to add in an extra trip. It had seemed a good idea at the time!



Our day trip took us into the untouched beauty and raw nature of Langjökull, Iceland's second largest glacier. It translates as 'Long Glacier' and covers about 950 square km. The views were stunning as we stepped out on the ice cap, enjoying the view for miles of virgin snow and clear changing skies.



Iceland only has daylight between 11am and 4pm at this time of year. The beauty seemed to make standing outside at minus 15 degrees worth the effort. My heart missed a beat when it was disclosed that we would then enter the 500m man-made tunnel for an hour's walk to learn the basics of glacier knowledge.

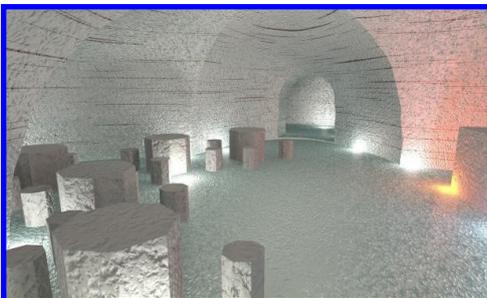
Centuries of snowfall have been compacted to form a river of ice that slowly slips downhill under the influence of gravity. Nevertheless, global warming poses a very real threat. The rate of retreat has gradually been increasing and the glacier has shrunk. While most scientists say it has 150 years left before the ice has completely melted, the worst-case scenarios give it a life expectancy of just 65 years.



Iceland without ice! This would also contribute to rising sea levels. Icelanders are very environmentally conscious, and it does seem such a shame that they would be one of the first affected islands by the loss of land at sea level, where most of the



population of some 350,000 people live.



We went deep inside the man-made tunnels to the blue heart of the glacier. I must admit that I felt slightly anxious, and a bit too close to my Maker. To my surprise, at the centre, was a small chapel and altar carved out deep in the glacier, where weddings are conducted. We were invited to sing, and the acoustics were tremendous. It certainly was an unexpected worship experience for us and gave me the chance not to miss my choir practice albeit from a far distant place.

I was glad to surface and board the modified army glacier vehicle which took us off the glacier in the dark and to a hot islandic meal. A few hours later we were back in the hotel. The houses are beautifully warm inside. Langjökull glacier feeds Pingvallavatn, Iceland's largest natural lake. As Iceland is a volcanic island, ironically this frigid body of ice is also responsible for some of the country's natural occurring hot springs. It might be cold water that seeps out of the glacier, but the geothermal energy created by the volcanoes soon heats it up. The hot steam and water are piped for miles creating a source for central heating and hot water. But I must admit, that it is good to be safely back home!



Christine Macleod

TOTS CHRISTMAS PARTY



Tots and Carers had a wonderful Christmas party with a nativity play put on by the volunteers from the perspective of the animals: a donkey, a lamb, an ox and a camel.

The children played pass the parcel and we enjoyed special food.



Father Christmas came and gave a gift of an activity book for each child - plus a child at heart as well.



Catherine says she is getting into the Christmas spirit now and ready for upcoming carol services!



CHRISTIAN MEDITATION at Fenstanton

The next meditations will be on the second Tuesday, **8th January at 2:30 pm** and Tuesday **12th February 2:30pm** at Fenstanton URC*

All are welcome to these sessions, even if you have not been before*, give it a try.

We will be using meditations and prayers from Christian authors in all our sessions as well as short bible readings.

John Williams
<jlec.williams44@yahoo.co.uk> or 'phone 01480 463 117

*Fenstanton URC church is on the green towards the end of Chequers Lane.

I Wonder Why?

I recently spent a delightful time with one of our great granddaughters, Delilah Grace, aged 5. A bright and inquisitive child whose favourite words at the moment – and for some time to come, I suspect - are “what?” and “why?”

Great granny, who is very old, must surely know the answers to every question?

I accept that curiosity should be encouraged in a child, but being ‘The Fount of all Wisdom’ to a 5-year old is not an easy task, especially if, like me, you have quite a few ‘what’s’ and ‘why’s’ of your own.

One of life’s mysteries – to me at least – is the purpose behind the installation of a wrought-iron gate, installed to bridge a narrow gap in a 6-foot high fence. It appears to be guarding nothing more threatening than a static-caravan site. But for what purpose? What needs this level of protection and who is being denied



access?

The bars of the gate are substantial and the chain and padlock are of a formidable weight and design. Allowing for the hinges, the aperture is less than 12 inches wide – impossible to negotiate with a bicycle or pushchair – and near impossible for anyone of any size. Even a sideways slide through the gap would be impossible for most.

I stand alongside Delilah Grace and ask “What?” and “Why?”

I enquired of my own Fount of all Wisdom but his only response was

“Matthew chapter 7, verse 13.” I quote: ‘Enter through the narrow gate. For broad is the road that leads to destruction.’

I won’t bother Delilah Grace with this just now, but will settle for a line from Moody and Sankey’s ‘Songs and Solos’ - “God holds the key of all unknown, and I am glad.”

PS If anyone knows the what? and why? of this mystery, do let me know.

Hazel Newton

EPIPHANY - the manifestation, or revealing of Christ to the Magi

Many Christians around the world annually celebrate Epiphany on January 6. It is a public holiday in many countries.

It marks two events in Jesus Christ’s life, according to the Bible. It commemorates the first two occasions on which Jesus’ divinity, according to Christian belief, was manifested: when the three kings (also known as wise men or Magi) visited infant Jesus in Bethlehem.



The second event was later when St John the Baptist baptized Jesus as a grown man in the River Jordan.

New beginnings for our Lord and new beginnings for us all. Each day will show something new from God, we just have to keep listening and looking. Let us join together in our new year which is not about changing the dates but direction; it’s not about changing the calendar but commitment; it’s not about changing the actions but attitude. May each and every day of yours be renewed with happiness and love.

Church Activities

Mondays	19:00	Bowls Club
Wednesdays	10:00 - 11:30	Tots & Carers Term time only
Last Wednesday of each month	19:45	Poetry Group
Tuesdays - January 8th February	14:30	Meditation Group at Fenstanton URC

Community Activities

Mondays	10:00	CRUSE
Tuesdays	20:00	St Ives Photographic Club
Wednesdays	14:00	Senior Citizens Club
Thursdays	09:45	Sunny Steps
Wed 2nd Jan	11:00	U3A Current Affairs
Thu 3rd Jan	11:00	U3A British Music Hall
Fri 11th Jan	10:00	COPE
Sat 12th Jan	19:00	COSI Winter Concert
Sat 15th Jan	10:00	Alzheimer's Support Drop-in Cafe
Wed 16th Jan	11:00	U3A Current Affairs
Wed 16th Jan	19:00	St Ives Gardening Club
Thu 17th Jan	11:00	U3A British Music Hall
Fri 18th Jan	19:00	Civic Society of St Ives
Fri 25th Jan	10:00	U3A Local History
Wed 30th Jan	19:30	RSPB
Sat 2nd Feb	09:30 - 15:30	Saints Crafters Fair
Wed 6th Feb	11:00	U3A Current Affairs
Thu 7th Feb	11:00	U3A British Music Hall
Thu 7th Feb	19:00	WI



10th ANNIVERSARY **Of** **SAINTS CRAFTERS FAIRS**

2019 sees the coming of the anniversary of the crafts fairs that have been held in the hall of the St Ives Free Church. It will be the completion of ten years at this venue in the centre of town and it grows stronger as the years have passed.

In offering a variety of real crafts, too many to list here, these talented and gifted crafters come from towns and villages in and around SAINT Ives and SAINT Neots which takes the name of our group.

On Saturday 2nd February will be our first fair to see the new year in and we'll be opening from 09.30am to 3.30pm and entrance as always is FREE.

The Saints Crafters thank everyone who has visited us over the years and look forward to welcoming regular friends and meeting new ones to view the arts and crafts for the years to come and see handmade, beautiful items of real crafting once again.

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Open 9am - 1pm Monday to Friday

Room Bookings should be made through the Church Office

The Free Church is committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

FREE CHURCH WORSHIP

Chapel Prayers - Monday to Saturday
At 10am

Sun 6th Jan	11:00	Revd Dr Catherine Ball - Holy Communion
Sun 13th Jan	11:00	Revd Derek Newton
Sun 20th Jan	11:00	Revd Dr Catherine Ball
Sun 27th Jan	11:00	Revd Dr Catherine Ball - Cafe style service
Sun 3rd Feb	11:00	Revd Dr Catherine Ball - Holy Communion

2019!!

The new year is upon us - may the Lord Jesus Christ see us through the dark days of winter, light up the view of the new year and show us the spirit and joy of little things, love for one another and peace in our world.

Amen

Fenstanton Worship

Sun 6th Jan	09:30	Revd Derek Newton - Epiphany
Sun 13th Jan	09:30	Revd Dr Catherine Ball - Holy Communion
Sun 20th Jan	09:30	Revd Dr Catherine Ball
Sun 27th Jan	09:30	Revd Peter Ball
Sun 3rd Feb	09:30	Revd Derek Newton