

Dear all

Well, I am bang in the middle of all sorts of stuff for our Christmas services. It's an almost military planning, checking the various rules and regulations, putting it into guidelines for those who wish to attend the services (especially those who are not regular members), producing risk assessments, service sheets etc.. We're getting there, but it will be somewhat limited in what we can do.

Here is the plan for the remaining services in December – all services will be live streamed on Facebook.

Sunday 20th December 10.00am Communion service
6.00pm Festival of Lessons and Carols (choir singing only), followed by carol singing in the churchyard (weather permitting – bring a torch) **must be pre-booked. Email or phone me.**

Thursday 24th December 4.00pm Crib Service **must be pre-booked. Email or phone me.**
11.30pm Midnight Mass **must be pre-booked. Email or phone me.**

Friday 25th December 10.00am Christmas Day Communion service

Sunday 27th December 10.00am Communion service

There will be a communion on Thursday mornings (including Christmas Eve) at 9.30am.

Please note that, while the church heating has just been serviced and repaired, and is going well, we are also required to have good ventilation – so wrap up warmly!

All of these are provisional, depending on current COVID guidelines. Any changes will be noted on Facebook, and in the noticeboard on Church Street.

The Church of England website has a page of *Church Online*, which includes a list of services you can log onto at various times. The link is [Church online | The Church of England](#)

I thought you might enjoy the Pause for Thought that Richard Coles gave on Radio 2 this morning:

'Twas the night before Strictly, and all round the set,
Lay puddles of tears that were shed by Janette
When she and the nation were moved by the pleas
Of her partner, who all but got down on his knees,
So the judges' four tens would by us be upheld;
I can't say his name for it's funnily spelled,
With an H and an R and a V and Y
He doesn't like vowels, I've no idea why.
Successfully done! (however, you say it),
And the bookies think Harvey and she might just slay it.

But there's Bill, butch in Latin, in ballroom so floaty,
A miracle thanks to the brilliance of Oti,
Who takes twenty years off a middle aged man
Choreographically summoning Pan,
To the sound of Dave Arch and the band in the groove -
The thing in week two was my favourite move,
When arms up went one way and legs went the other,
So synched you would think they were sister and brother,

And better and better they get every week,
Dispatching first Jacqui and Anton du Beke;
Then down went the others, until there remained
The glitter ball - theirs if a victory's gained...

But between it and them, three more couples stand yet -
I've already said H. R. V. Y and Janette -
but there's Jamie and Karen, and Maisie and Gorks,
And the path to success is not straight, for it forks,
And can go either way, just consider the run
of Karen and Jamie, for it had begun
Not with this slate of couples, but back with last year's
When Jamie departed, in pain and in tears...
He's returned, with a vengeance, and Karen on side,
- the tears of frustration were transmogrified
into tears of delight, for in spite of the song,
Their salsa to Last Dance went more right than wrong,
And they're dancing again, in the final no less,
but will they checkmate with their Tango-themed chess?

That leaves only Maisie, well partnered with Gorka,
Their Viennese waltz in the semis, a corker:
So graceful, so pretty, I ask myself how
He got on when he played with Athletic Bilbao?
And Maisie's a wonder, in ballroom and Latin,
She raises the pulse (oh thank goodness for statin),
She's a worthy contender, the judges agree,
Let's hope she's not stopped on the A5183.

It's all happening tomorrow: till then we must wait:
Like Christians in Advent, who anticipate,
A result for us all, not just champions of dance -
But for those who would not stand a ghost of a chance,
For the clumsy and hopeless, for those who are fated
To leave in round two, so un CO-ordinated,
For all who are tired, fed up, and have been
Worn out by the trials of COVID19...

Look up, look up all, from the dark and the cold,
For a wonderful thing is right there to behold,
A glitterball moving across the night sky
Towards Bethlehem, where our victory is nigh.

Sonia recently sent me some jokes she came across, to share with you:

Q. Why didn't Mary and Joseph make it to Bethlehem?

A. Because all Virgin flights were cancelled.

Q. Why didn't Mary and Joseph make their work conference call?

A. Because there was no zoom at the inn.

Q. Why are Santa's reindeer allowed to travel on Christmas Eve?

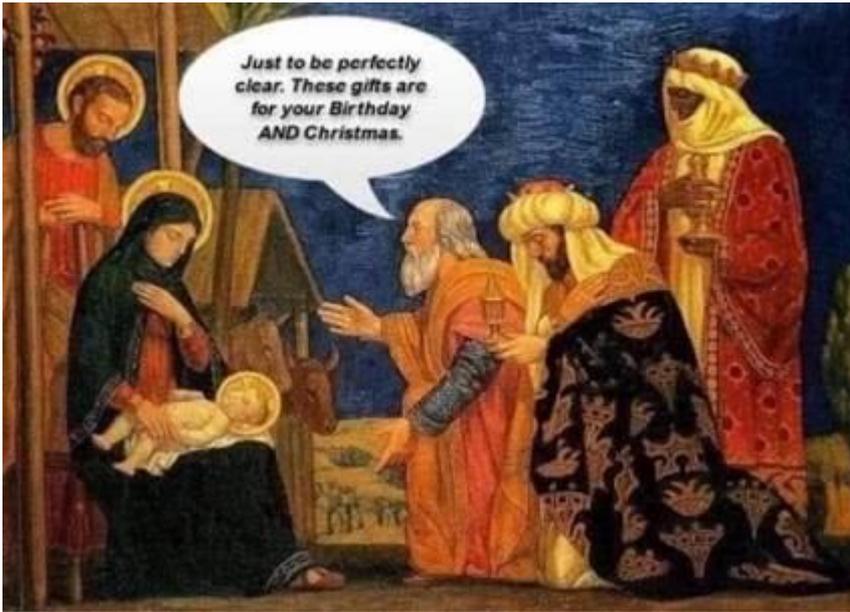
A. They have herd immunity.

Q. Have you heard production is down at Santa's workshop?

A. It's because many of the workers have had to elf-isolate.

My apologies – I didn't write them!

And a couple more amusements for you:



Perhaps the Nativity of the year (there's a sermon in here, I'm sure!)



And here is a link to a wonderfully funny version of the 12 Days of Christmas, by the choir of Clare College, Cambridge. Eat your hearts out, King's! [Facebook](#)



Stay safe

Blessings and love

Mark