



Holy Trinity WATERHEAD

Suggested
donation
50p

January 2024

holytrinitywaterhead.co.uk

Services at Holy Trinity Church

Sunday 11:00 am Parish Worship
Wednesday 7:00 pm Family Communion
Baptisms and marriages by arrangement with the Vicar.

Please submit items for the February magazine by 15 January. You can e-mail files to paulmonk111@gmail.com

People at Holy Trinity Church

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Letter from the Vicar

As I write, we are half way through Advent, the shops are already celebrating Christmas, I'm preparing for Easter services in 2024, compiling grants forms for projects later in the year, and hearing political pundits talk about economic forecasts for 2025! I feel like I'm getting lapped, so the temptation is to grab control by planning ahead, re-planning, then over-planning. It can become very destructive.

I know it makes sense to plan ahead because I'll be in trouble if I don't yet Jesus in Matthew 6:34 says, 'Do not worry about tomorrow', adding, 'Each day has enough trouble of its own'. There is much truth in both stances. How should we respond?

A former boss of mine had the catch-phrase, 'Failure to plan is planning to fail', which is true: reacting to circumstances is unlikely to result in wise choices, so its antidote is planning ahead. Jesus himself frequently planned ahead: think of his telling the disciples that he had planned everything for Palm Sunday (in Matthew 21) or for the Last Supper (in Mark 14, especially vv. 13-15).

But planning carefully is different from stressing and trying to second guess everything that could occur. We can put so much effort into planning for tomorrow that we forget to live today—that's what Jesus was warning against.

We need a happy medium between over-planning to the exclusion of living and reacting and risking mistakes. That midway point advises us to use our time wisely, so we can decide the amounts of time we will give to certain activities and causes. For example, we choose how much time we will set aside to study the scriptures or when to pray and for how long ... and will grow spiritually if we keep to them. We can also plan ahead how to respond if those prayer times are compromised.

Taken this way, the conscious decision to give time and attention to God is similar to a New Year's resolution for God. Like other New Year resolutions, it is less likely to lapse if we neither commit to something realistic nor commit without being precise.

Wishing you all a wonderful 2024 as we explore together our commitment to godliness:

PAUL

News

From the church and parish

Thanks to everyone's generous donations the 2023 Christmas raffle raised £135. Many thanks to everyone for their donations and to everyone bought tickets.

May I take this opportunity to thank everyone who gave financial contributions towards flowers in church this year, particularly towards the end of the year when we were able to do something special for Remembrance Sunday, the Confirmation Service, and for Christmas. The new flower list will be going up on the noticeboard at the back of the church so please add your name if you would like to pay for flowers for any special occasion.

Lynne Schofield

The Bishop of Middleton, the Rt Revd Mark Davies, came to our Mission Community on Sunday 26 November for our first ever **joint confirmation service**. In all, he confirmed 19 candidates from 7 local churches. He also baptised 3 and received 1 adult member in to the Church of England.



Bible readings for January

Sunday 7 January

The Baptism of Christ

First: Genesis 1:1-5

Epistle: Acts 19:1-7

Gospel: Mark 1:4-11

Sunday 21 January

Third Sunday of Epiphany

First: Genesis 14:17-20

Epistle: Revelation 19:6-10

Gospel: John 2:1-11

Sunday 14 January

Second Sunday of Epiphany

First: 1 Samuel 3:1-10

Epistle: Revelation 5:1-10

Gospel: John 1:43-end

Sunday 28 January

Fourth Sunday of Epiphany

First: Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Epistle: Revelation 12:1-5a

Gospel: Mark 1:21-28

Contemplation is nothing else but a secret, peaceful, and loving infusion of God, which, if admitted, will set the soul on fire with the Spirit of love.

John of the Cross



'Sometimes I forget to witness ... so now I'm covered!'

The idea of a covenant between a Christian and God appears frequently in the Bible. John Wesley, who founded the Methodist movement, wrote a 'Covenant Prayer' to be read aloud once a year at a special service. He held his first service on Monday 11 August 1755, at the French church at Spitalfields in London. It was attended by 1800 people.

Wesley attributed it to the English puritan Joseph Alleine (1634–1668), but he wrote it through the lens of his own churchmanship. We don't know the words of his original Covenant Prayer, but many think its words will have been similar to those Wesley published in his 1780 pamphlet *Directions for Renewing our Covenant with God*.

This idea of a covenant between a Christian and God was basic to John Wesley's understanding of Christian discipleship. He saw the relationship with God in covenant as being like a marriage between human beings (both as a community and as individuals) on the one side and God in Christ on the other (cf. Ephesians 5:21–33). Later versions incorporated words from the wedding service: Christ is 'my Head and Husband, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, for all times and conditions, to love, honour and obey thee before all others, and this to the death'.

Wesley recognised that people need to grow in their relationship with God. He emphasised repeatedly that God's grace and love both prompt us to seek Him and be transformed by Him, so we should pray to grow in holiness and love.

Over a number of years, Wesley gradually saw the need for some regular ceremony which would enable people to open themselves to God more fully. He looked for some means of helping them to hear God's offer and challenge ever more deeply and to allow God to prompt and enable them to respond.

Wesley's first service came from the Puritan tradition of pastoral and spiritual guidance. He therefore insisted that his own Covenant Service be located in a framework of pastoral care, preaching, and guidance.

That framework dealt with the corporate needs of a particular society of Christian disciples and, within that, with the needs of all the individuals within that group. It therefore linked personal devotion with corporate worship.

Although Wesley's early covenant services were not held at any particular time of year, in British Methodism the custom soon developed of holding Covenant Services near the beginning of the New Year.

**I am no longer my own but yours.
Put me to what you will,
rank me with whom you will;
put me to doing,
put me to suffering;
let me be employed for you,
or laid aside for you,
exalted for you,
or brought low for you;
let me be full,
let me be empty,
let me have all things,
let me have nothing:
I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things
to your pleasure and disposal.
And now, glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
you are mine and I am yours. So be it.
And the covenant now made on earth,
let it be ratified in heaven.
Amen.**

**We reiterate our own covenant with God during
the first Sunday service of 2024.**

The Covenant Service

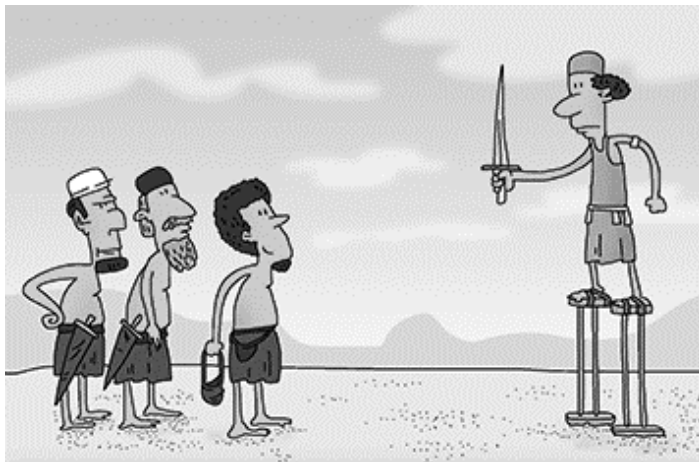
The word 'mission' means an important assignment given to a person or group of people. The Lord Jesus gave a mission to his church, which he often expressed in terms of his idea of 'the Kingdom'. Helping to create this Kingdom lies at the centre of the template prayer he taught us when he told us to ask God, saying, 'Your Kingdom come!'

The mission to create the Kingdom is a big subject, so the Church has helpfully issued a statement on mission, calling it the 'Marks of Mission'. It is based on Jesus' own mission and expresses the Anglican Communion's understanding and commitment to mission.

The Church has sub-divided the topic into five interconnected 'Marks' that each works toward the same goal. They are:

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
3. To respond to human need by loving service
4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace, and to reconciliation
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

The marks of mission



Goliath's replacement was even less effective
(with apologies to 1 Samuel 17)

The first Mark of Mission, which concerns evangelism and summarises the central idea of what mission is about, should be the key statement about everything we do in mission. It seeks to bring ever more people into a relationship with God. To that end, we are to 'proclaim'.

The concept of proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom is very simple. We tell people about God using whichever methods come to hand. The word 'Gospel' means 'Good News', so proclaiming wrath or unpleasant ideas about God is not sharing the Good News. Rather, we should concentrate on God's goodness and His unconditional love.

In fact, the word 'proclaim' has a wide range of meanings. At one extreme, it means to 'preach' and teach, sharing the message verbally and in print. But we can also reason and explain, use metaphors and parables, by means of pre-prepared texts or off-the-cuff discussions. All are valid.

It's important that we teach by example, so telling people will see us before they hear what we say. Preaching about God's love requires that we aim to be loving. In the same way, proclaiming a message that differs from our own behaviour can imply we are being hypocritical.

There is one further reason why we should proclaim the Gospel. As any teacher will explain, the best way to understand an idea or subject is to teach it. By proclaiming the Good News, we will better understand the ideas, and therefore find it easier to follow for ourselves.

The first mark of mission

Preach the Gospel at all times.

Only use words if necessary.

Usually attributed to Francis of Assisi

This is a season of weeping and mourning, but it is not void of hope.
Our tears are the bridge between brutality and humanity.
Our tears are the salty gates for seeing a different reality.
Our tears are facing soulless nations and a parched mentality.
Our tears are the dam preventing rivers of animosity.
For the sake of the mourning men, cry with us to reflect your amity.
For the sake of the poor children, cry with us demanding sanity.
For the sake of lamenting mothers, refuse violence and stupidity.
Love your enemies and cry with them is the advice of divinity.
Blessing those who curse is the path to genuine spirituality.
Pouring tears of mercy and compassion is true piety.
Pray with tears, for the sake of spreading equity.
Followers of Jesus: crying is now our responsibility.
But don't cry for your friends only, cry also for your enemy.

Yohanna Katanacho, a Palestinian theologian

Prayer for peace

I made a covenant with my hands not to be reaching
for love and praise which once were all my light.
These are for Christ by the most utter right.

I made a covenant with my tongue not to be speaking
of aught that draws me from the Word apart,
much less to interpret Him in my heart.

I made a covenant with my eyes not to be watching
to see what beauty might come down to me.
Christ is my beauty; Him alone I see.

I made a covenant with my heart never and nowhere
to be admitting any lover but Him. I take for witnesses the
Seraphim.

This is the document I have been writing
in painful letters for these many years
with shame and failure and a yield of tears.

I made two copies for my own protection:
one to be carried, ready to unroll,
one to post up on gates outside my soul.

Jessica Powers O.C.D.

Covenant

John was born Juan de Yepes y Álvarez in Castile, Spain. His family were Jewish converts to Catholicism, and were therefore considered 'tainted'. His father, Gonzalo, was an accountant to richer relatives who were silk merchants but, in 1529 he married John's mother Catalina, who was an orphan from a lower class; his family rejected him, forcing him to work with his wife as a weaver. John's father died in 1545 while John was still only around three years old. Thereafter, the family were so poor that, two years after John's birth, his older brother Luis died of starvation, probably as a result of the poverty to which the family had been reduced. John himself was tiny—almost a dwarf

The family moved to Medina where John was enrolled in a school for paupers and received a basic education, food, clothing, and lodging. He later worked at a hospital while studying at a Jesuit school from 1559 to 1563. He entered the Carmelite Order in 1563 taking the name 'John of St Matthias'.

John made his first vows in 1564 and travelled to Salamanca University to study theology and philosophy where he excelled in everything.

John was ordained a priest in 1567 and moved back to Medina where, by chance, he met the influential and charismatic Carmelite nun Teresa of Ávila, who was staying there to found the second of her new convents. In context, she wanted to restore the purity of the ancient Carmelite Order by reverting to the observance of its 'Primitive Rule' of 1209, which had been relaxed by Pope Eugene IV in 1432. Teresa wanted something much stricter with lengthy periods of fasting; long periods of silence; simpler habits of coarser cloth; and an injunction against wearing covered shoes. That particular observance distinguished the 'discalced' (so 'barefoot') followers of Teresa from traditional Carmelites.

John soon became her disciple and, in 1568, helped form the first monastery for Carmelite men to follow Teresa's principles. They were given a derelict house that had been donated to Teresa. There, he established the monastery on 28 November 1568 and changed his monastic name to 'John of the Cross'.

The new order grew fast. During the years 1575–77, the reforms under Teresa and John caused tensions between the new and old Carmelite wings of the order and, on 2 December 1577, John was kidnapped by a group of Carmelites opposed to the reforms, who jailed him. The regime was brutal and included public lashings and severe isolation in a tiny stifling cell measuring barely 10 by 6 feet. He had to stand on a bench to read his prayer book by a tiny overhead light.

During this imprisonment he composed much of his most famous poem,

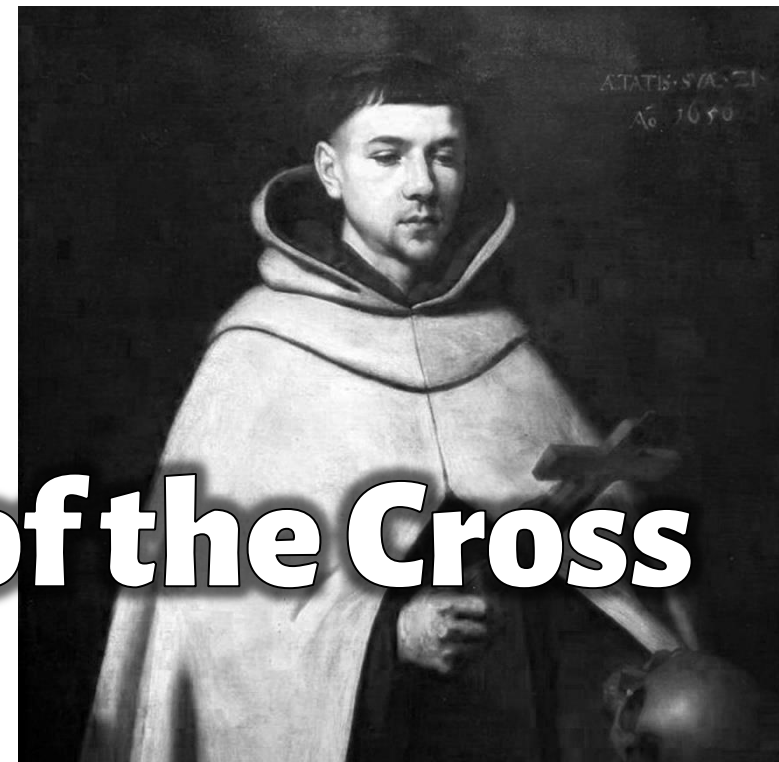
The Spiritual Canticle, as well as several shorter poems. The paper on which he wrote was smuggled to him by the friar who guarded his cell. He managed to escape eight months later, on 15 August 1578, through a small window in a room adjoining his cell.

John was nursed back to health by Teresa's nuns in Toledo, but swiftly returned to the controversial reforms. In 1580, the Pope recognised the reform, so John's life became much safer. Thereafter, John travelled widely and accepted a wide array of posts in the new Carmelite Order. In 1591, he went to an isolated monastery in Andalusia where he fell ill, and died in agony on 14 December 1591. He was 49 years of age.

Today, John of the Cross is considered one of the foremost poets in the Spanish language. Two of his works, *the Spiritual Canticle* and *the Dark Night of the Soul*, are widely considered masterpieces of Spanish poetry, and his theological works often consist of commentaries on these poems. For example, the *Dark Night of the Soul* narrates the journey of a soul from its bodily home to union with God and the experiences required to attain spiritual maturity and union with God. This union is achieved through learning to love. His later book *the Ascent of Mount Carmel* is a systematic study of how a soul ascends when seeking a loving union with God, and his book *the Living Flame of Love* describes a greater intimacy with God as the soul responds to God's love. His books and poems, together with his *Sayings*

of Light and Love, are probably the most important spiritual works in Spanish, and have influenced more later writers more than any other mystical author.

John of the Cross



Eternal Father,
who at the baptism of Jesus
revealed him to be your Son,
anointing him with the Holy Spirit:
grant to us, who are born again by water and the Spirit,
that we may be faithful to our calling as your adopted children;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen

Collect

The Baptism of Christ

Love's hidden thread has drawn us to the font,
A wide womb floating on the breath of God,
Feathered with seraph wings, lit with the swift
Lightening of praise, with thunder over-spread,
And under-girded with an unheard song,
Calling through water, fire, darkness, pain,
Calling us to the life for which we long,
Yearning to bring us to our birth again.
Again the breath of God is on the waters
In whose reflecting face our candles shine,
Again he draws from death the sons and daughters
For whom he bid the elements combine.
As living stones around a font today,
Rejoice with those who roll the stone away.

Baptism

Malcolm Guite
used with permission © Malcolm Guite.

the Jesus ^ Christ

'Christ' is a title or description. It is not surname like 'Smith' or 'Jones'. In fact, if Jesus had a surname, it would have been 'bar-Joseph' which means 'Son of Joseph'.

The Bible always insists that Jesus was God:

- Titus 3:6 talks of 'our great God and saviour Jesus Christ'.
- John 1:1 says, 'The Word was with God and the Word was God.' In this context, it is clear that 'The Word' means Jesus.

Anointing

Anointing was a Jewish way of preparing a person for a special task or duty. All candidates for baptism and confirmation are anointed. Many people in the Bible were anointed. For example, David was anointed with olive oil to indicate that he would be Israel's next king (1 Samuel 16:13).



Why Jesus 'Christ'?

'Christ' is a Greek word that translates the Hebrew word 'Messiah'.

Both words mean '**Anointed**'

Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit when he was baptised. At the same time, he saw the Holy Spirit coming down from Heaven in the form of a dove.



JAN

7

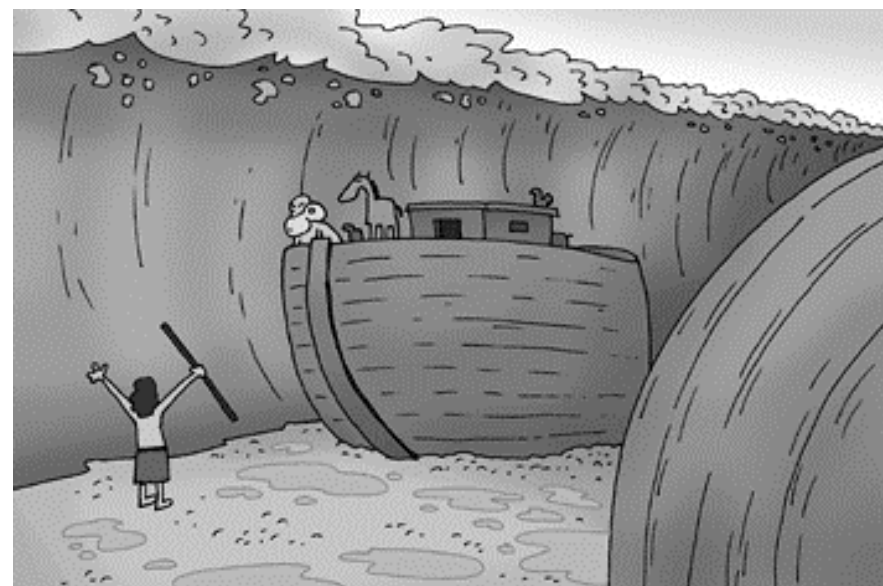
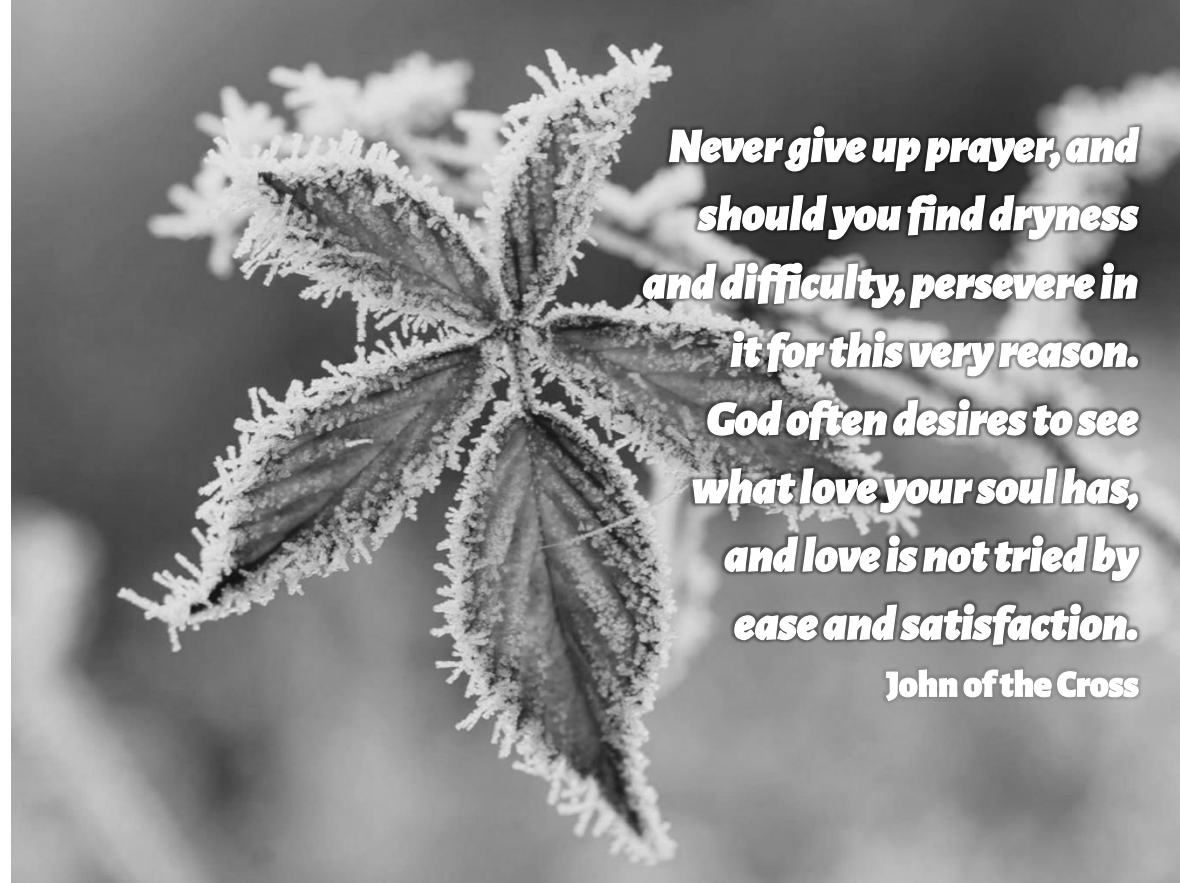
The Church remembers the baptism of Christ
on Sunday 7 January

Colour this page

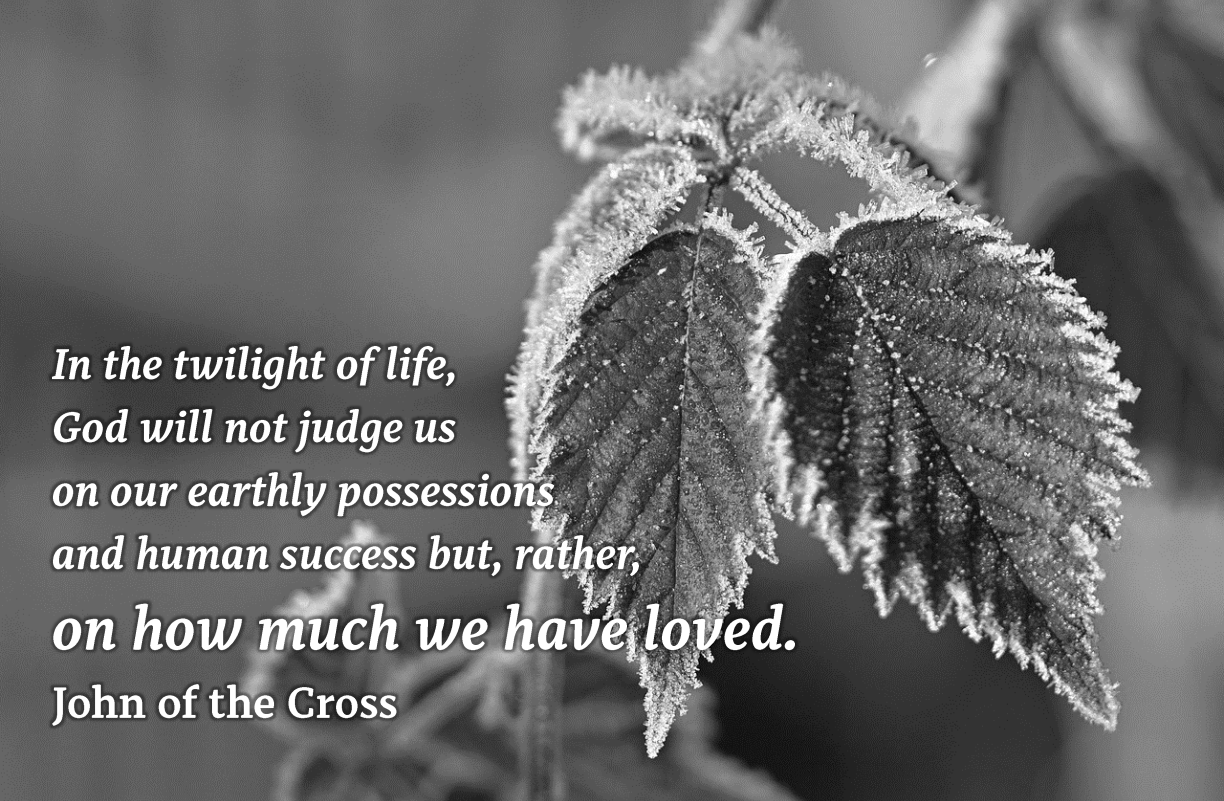
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Can you find the following words in this Wordsearch?

FALSE FRIENDS, GODS, GOSSIP, HOLY DAY, HURTING, IDOLS,
JEALOUSY, KILLING, LOVING GOD, LYING, PRIDE, STEALING



Noah and Moses having an argument



*In the twilight of life,
God will not judge us
on our earthly possessions
and human success but, rather,
on how much we have loved.*
John of the Cross

Dates for the diary

Tues–Fri, 2–5 January	10:00—2:00: Holiday activity club at St Barnabas.
Sunday 7 January	11:00 am: annual Covenant Service in the Church.
Weds 14 February	10:00 am: Ash Wednesday service in St Barnabas Church. 7:00 pm: Ash Wednesday service in the Church.
Sunday 31 March	11:00 am: Easter Day .
Sunday 24 June	Mid-afternoon: annual Confirmation Service .

Did you know?

Jesus said, 'Where two or three gather together in my name, there am I with them' *Matthew 18:20*.

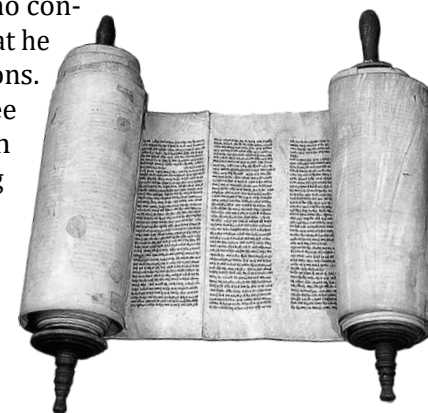
Of the early precursors to our current idea of a church and its congregation, perhaps the most important influence was the Synagogue. For a meeting in a Jewish synagogue to be legal, the minimum attendance was twelve men. It was quite common for a Synagogue meeting to be cancelled because too few men were present (even if women could have supplemented their numbers).

The Jewish people at this time considered the number ten to be sacred, for example because there were ten commandments.

Almost certainly, those rules concerning the synagogue derived from events in the Temple. Many of the more important Temple celebrations, such as the blessing the bread of the presence, were only considered valid if the Spirit of God had descended to join those present ... and the necessary criterion was for twelve elders to gather as a kind of 'sacred quorum'. In a similar way, one of the most important religious congregations that occurred in a synagogue involved reading aloud the Law and interpreting it; and again, twelve elders needed to be attendance. Some scholars think that Jesus chose *twelve* disciples in order to satisfy these ancient traditions.

Jesus was the Messiah (or, in Greek, 'Christ') because he was anointed with the Spirit of God. The Spirit was with him because of that anointing, so he was able to interpret scripture (think of the New Commandment in John 13:30); and, similarly, when Jesus established a new form of community—an assembly of people who congregated 'in his name'—it was natural that he also re-interpreted the relevant traditions.

When Jesus said that only two or three of his disciples needed to convene in order for him to be present, he was saying that his disciples were also filled with the Spirit. That's why we can bless bread at the Eucharist even if the number gathering is small.





Holy
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**Eucharist and ashing in preparation for
the observance of a holy Lent**

**Wednesday 14 February
at 7:00 pm**

Ash Wednesday



Holy
Trinity
WATERHEAD

Easter Sunday

**A joy-filled family service to celebrate the
resurrection of our Lord**

Sunday 31 March at 11:00 am

holytrinitywaterhead.co.uk

A prayer for an unknown future

My Lord God:

I have no idea where I am going.

I do not see the road ahead of me.

Nor do I really know myself,

**and the fact that I think that I am following your
will does not mean that I am actually doing so.**

**But I believe that the desire to please you does
in fact please you.**

**And I hope that I have that desire
in all that I am doing.**

**I hope that I will never do anything apart from
that desire.**

**And I know that if I do this you will lead me
by the right road
though I may know nothing about it.**

**Therefore will I trust in you always though I may
seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.**

**I will not fear, for you are ever with me,
and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.
Amen.**

Thomas Merton

The 'Waterloo' and 'Peel' Churches of Oldham

The end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 created the first stability England had seen for almost a century. The peace brought a new sense of intellectual freedom and was accompanied by the creation of new industries, new political landscapes, and of course the new wealth that came with the cessation of war. A first fruit of this money and energy involved planning for a better future. That process also involved re-assessing the past through a re-discovery of history.

The first major change to affect the Church was a readjustment of the relationship between Parliament and the Church. The first Act of Parliament sponsored by this new mindset was the 'Church Building Act' of 1818 which voted the colossal sum of £1,000,000 toward the cost of building many new Anglican churches. The Parliamentary representatives who enacted the process were the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, so the new churches were soon called 'Commissioners' Churches' (although some were also called 'Waterloo Churches' and 'Million Act Churches').

In many cases the Ecclesiastical Commissioners provided the full cost of the new church while in others they provided a grant with the balance being raised locally. The principal Commissioners' Churches in Oldham are St James' on Barry Street (1829) and a complete rebuilding of Oldham Parish Church, St Mary with St Peter (1836).

In 1843, the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel, passed a similar Act 'to provide better provision for the spiritual care of populous parishes'. Its Preamble rehearses the reason for the Act. It says: 'it is expedient to make better provision for the spiritual care of populous parishes' and thereby 'render the estates and revenues vested in the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and the funds ... applicable to such purpose'.

This far-reaching measure was soon termed the 'Peel Act'. It permitted the first major boundary reforms of the modern age, thereby allowing the sub-division of geographically-large or overly-populated parishes, and thence created a series of smaller parishes.

The Act's first condition for a new parish was a population exceeding 4,000 souls—easily achieved for a rapidly industrialised town like Oldham. The town was duly ceded from the vast medieval Parish of Prestwich and thence subdivided into a series of new, more manageable parishes.

The core purpose of the Act was to enable local clergy to provide better spiritual care in these new and populous regions. So a central feature of the Act was providing endowments that paid a generous stipend for the new class of Vicars. The stipend was generally set at about £150; and the stipend at Waterhead was the same. The patronage of all the Peel Churches alternated between the Crown and the diocesan bishop.

The Act also created Church buildings, which were inevitably called 'Peel Churches'. The Act stipulated that at least half the seats in each church should be free, so attending a service of divine worship did not necessitate the poor paying a so-called 'pew rent'. In effect, then, the Act was a form of suffrage for it legislated for the poor to have equal access to God.

The five Peel Churches of Oldham are St Mark's in Glodwick (1844); Holy Trinity in Waterhead (1847); Holy Trinity in Coldhurst (1848); St Thomas' in Werneth (1855); and the district church of St John's in Chadderton. Although St Thomas' Church in Lees was built at the same time and by Shellard, who designed Waterhead, it is not a Peel Church.



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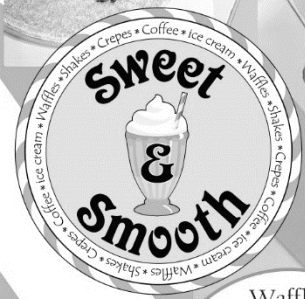
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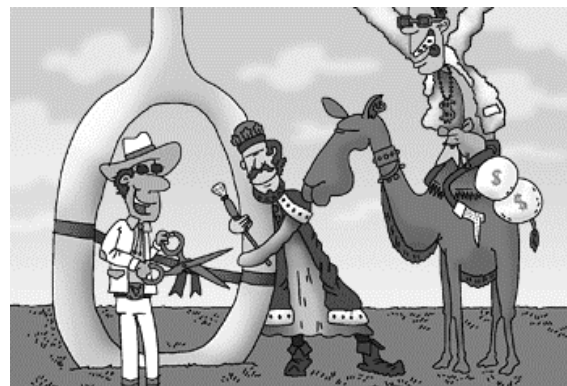
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**'Gentlemen, I will now cut the ribbon ...
and project "gigantic needle" will be
under way.'**

(with apologies to Mark 10:25)

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From the memorial book

- 1 **Clara Johnson** died 1998 aged 88 years. Remembered with love.
- 6 **John Murray**, loving husband, father and grandfather, died this day 1998 aged 71. Loved and remembered always
- 9 **Millicent Borrell** died this day in 1999. Time passes, memories stay. Loved and remembered every day.
- 11 **John Shaw Crossley** died this day 1990. Looking back as we always do, we will treasure the memories we have of you.
- 12 **Harry Watton** Beloved Husband and father. Died on this day 1983, aged 63 years.
- 15 **Elsie Kershaw**, died this day 2004. A loving mother, grandmother, sister and friend. 'Pal of my cradle days.'
- 18 **Alan Wolstencroft** died 2000 aged 68. Much loved Husband, Dad and Grandad.
Amy Wainwright died this day 2006 aged 91 years. A devoted mum and grandma, remembered every day with love and affection.
- 23 **Annie Chadwick** late of 560 Huddersfield Road. Born 29th October 1896. Died this day 1995. 'In Heavenly Love Abiding.'
- 25 **Tom Slater Henthorn** died this day 1959. 'A Devout and Well Loved Church Worker.'
- 26 **Caroline Brooks** Beloved Mother and Grandmother. Died 1979. 'Reunited and sings in Heaven.'
Mrs Mary Robinson died this day 1989. 'A much loved Mother, Grandmother and Great Grandmother.'
Elsie Dearden nee Brooks, died this day 2002. Dearly loved daughter, wife and mother. Reunited with her loved ones.
- 29 **Wilfred George Graham** died 1979 aged 69. Treasured memories of a loving Dad and Grandad.
- 30 **Jane Ann Stott**. Died 1956. 'A muck loved Mother and Grandmother.'
- 31 **John Fletcher** died 1948. Always remembered.

Funded by the Department for Education and administered by Oldham Council.

Booking is essential. Please scan the QR code, or text (07492) 849 158, giving your child's name, age, contact number, session date, and HAF code. Thank you.

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Family activity club

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All children must always be accompanied by an adult.

barnabas-thrive-oldham.co.uk



Holiday Club

During the first week of January (which is the second week of the school Christmas break), our sister Church St Barnabas is hosting a family activity club. It's totally free: we have received funding from the Department for Education, as administered by Oldham Council. It convenes on Tuesday–Friday, 2–5 January, 10:00—2:00 pm. All are welcome, priority is given to children in receipt of free school meals. All children should be accompanied by an adult, please.

From the parish registers

Holy Matrimony

Saturday 30 December Jamie McCarthy and Bethany Whitehouse,
at St John the Baptist Church, Hey



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