



Parkwood Methodist Church

Newsflash Herald

December 2020



St. Mark's Parish Centre
53 Thornhill Road
Longwood HD3 4UL

This has been produced as a Newsflash to show the meaning of Christmas.

It was originally proposed to issue with the next Herald but I thought it would have more meaning to release it now. (Ed!)

Thoughts on a Lockdown Advent

On Advent Sunday, at the end of November, it marked the beginning of our Christian Calendar for another year, as we celebrate the light of Jesus coming into our World.

Maybe one of the reasons our Christian Calendar was put together is to remind us that our lives can be so busy, that we sometimes find it difficult to find the time to reflect on the unfolding stories of our faith.

The Christian Calendar reminds us of the stories of our faith, because, without stories I believe our lives would be empty, just like hollow husks.

Perhaps sometimes we need something to stop ourselves in our tracks, as it were, and help us to step out of ourselves for a little while.

I've noticed that something rather odd has happened over the past few months. Perhaps it is due to our extraordinary times that we hear quite often that an important part of our faith, the celebration of bringing of Light into the world, has been appropriated and used in a far wider community context.

I've been amazed by how many times I've heard the stories of people being interviewed on TV and Radio, and as they have been struggling for the words to explain their experience of lockdown they have somehow grasped the idea of Light overcoming Darkness to explain how they feel.

I've also lost count of the number of times I've heard the saying: 'Light at the end of the tunnel'.

Light and Darkness, Darkness and Light have gone mainstream in these extraordinary times through what we live, and here we are celebrating, and reminding ourselves in Advent of our faith in Our Lord bringing to us a light to shine in our darkness.

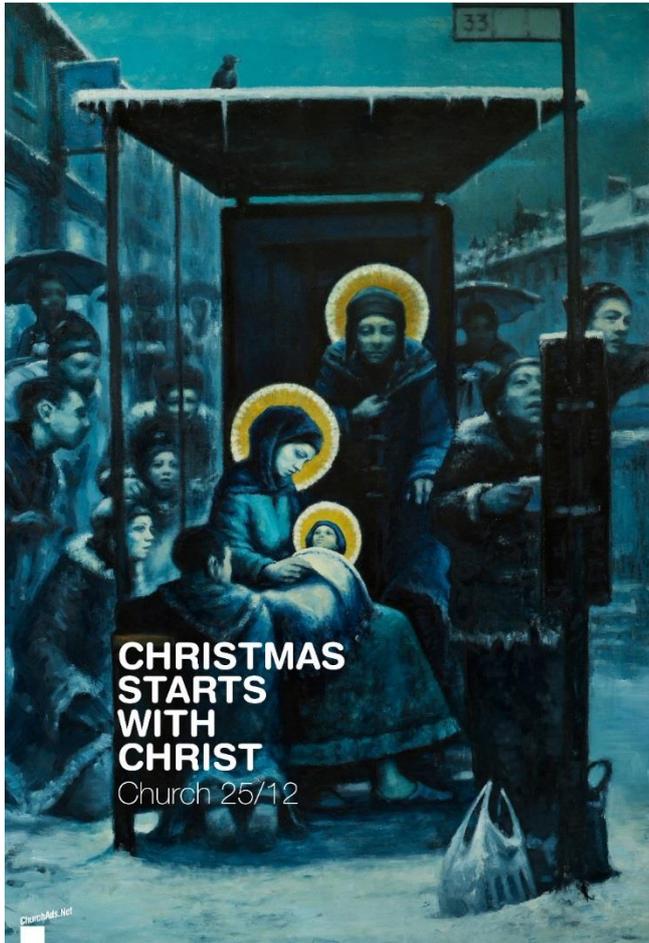
There's also one thing I'd overlooked as I was thinking about our Lockdown Advent, and that is that Jesus was born into an ugly and cruel 'Lockdown' of the Roman military occupation of Judea.

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'Seeking to be the People of Christ at the Heart of the Community'.

Make no mistake about it, this was a brutal armed lockdown and occupation of Judea at this time.

The gospel record reveals to us that the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem for the census was a result of a decree that went out from the Roman Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered.



A few years ago I saw this poster outside St Anne's church in Manchester. It brought home to me what the shabbiness the birth of Jesus would have been really like. Here we have the birth of Jesus being registered in a bus shelter in Manchester.

Strange times indeed for us!

Stay safe,

John

Stay in touch with the Zoom Service; 11.00am Sunday. For further details please contact Anne or any of the Leadership Team for details.

The WEDNESDAY Parkwood Catch-up. 2.30pm on Zoom. Again contact Anne or any of the leadership Team: John, Elaine, Sandra, Janet, Gareth or Joe for more information.

Don't forget the Advent walk around Longwood, St. Mark's Church and Centre.

Stay Safe and Hoping All have a Happy and Joyful Christmas.

Merry Christmas

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