



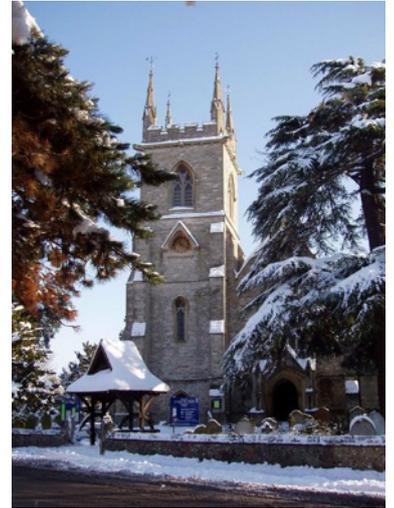
EWELL PARISH NEWS

The monthly newspaper of St Mary the Virgin Ewell

No. 576

January 2021

60p



Sharing the Love of Christ, the Light of the World, with the people of Ewell

2021

31 January Candlemas
14 March Mothering Sunday
28 March Palm Sunday
2 April Good Friday
4 April Easter Day
23 May Pentecost
TBC Ewell Village Fair
12 Sep St Mary's Patronal Festival
25 Sep Day for All
30 October All Souls
31 October All Saints
14 Nov Remembrance Sunday
28 Nov Advent Sunday
25 Dec Christmas Day

 **St Mary's Ewell**
www.stmarysewell.com

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The Vicar writes

I expect most of us will be glad to see the calendar say 2021 and put 2020 behind us. Since I wrote in the last EPN, we have had the wonderful news about vaccines, and as I write now, the first administration of vaccines in the UK is about to begin. As we begin the new year, then, if we can't say we are near the end, we can at least say we are at the beginning of the end. We may not see COVID entirely eradicated any time soon, and of course the challenge of vaccinating enough of a world population to make a difference is mind-boggling, but there is hope that in the coming months life will start to return to normal. The Ewell Village Fair committee, for example, will be meeting in during January to begin planning in hope!

Before we leave 2020 behind us, though, perhaps a few thoughts about the year that is passing. We have sadly lost a number of church members, and many of us have lost friends or families. Others have lost jobs or businesses or seen medical appointments slip. We have missed out on many of our favourite activities in our church life together, not least over Christmas. Despite all this, perhaps the new year is a time to reflect on whether there is anything from 2020 we want to bring over into the new year. For many, the year saw a renewed understanding of how much we rely on one another, and how blessed we are by the dedication of so many front-line workers. Many of us have got to know our locality better, discovered walks and nature close to home, or forged stronger links with our neighbours. Let us hope that these silver linings are not forgotten as and when the restrictions are lifted. In church, we have begun live-streaming services so those who are isolating, housebound, or unable to attend in person can join in with the service in church remotely: something else which I hope will continue.

In the new vaccines, the scientific achievement is breath-taking. The research, the testing, and the logistical exercise in delivering vaccines at scale and at speed are all testimony to the scientific endeavour. Science brings together people of all nations, and of all faiths and of none: a truly human community. For Christians, we see in science a reflection of the God who is faithful, who creates law in nature, and whose reason we can approach, however imper-

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The Parish Office is on the south side of the church.

The Parish Office is closed to visitors at present. Please telephone or email instead.

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CAFE NESCO

On Tuesdays in term time, students from NESCO are serving simple lunches in our church hall (London Rd, opposite the church) between 12 and 1.30pm.

Soup, sandwiches, salad, and cakes, with tea, coffee, and soft drinks.

Everyone welcome!

Postponed till further notice

fectly, with our own minds. As I have written in these pages several times before, the common trope of 'science vs religion' is a mis-reading of history. Christians and people of every faith rejoice that science is able to fight disease and help us put into practice God's will for healing and wholeness.

Given my age I will, rightly, be one of those who is not offered a vaccine for a few months... others have higher priority. But whenever the opportunity comes, those who roll up their sleeves are not just receiving immunity for themselves, but helping our whole community to be better protected. Amid all the trials of these days, we have reason now, I think, to be able to wish one another a happy new year, and to hope and pray that 2021 will bring blessing.

IN CHURCH IN JANUARY

As I have to say every month at the moment, please keep an eye on the website or noticeboards as our plans may have to change at a moment's notice. For now, we plan to continue with the 9:30am Parish Eucharist each Sunday, open both to congregation in person and by livestream at www.facebook.com/stmarysewell/live. St Mary's Kidz will continue online at 11am, but we hope to be able to hold more services and activities in person in church soon for children and families.

Our online activities can continue, in particular our very popular church quizzes. On 6 and 27 January at 8pm on Zoom you will be able to join in our light-hearted, no pressure quiz with others from church. Keep an eye on the Weekly Notes on our website for the links to sign up ahead of time, then you are sent a Zoom link on the day.

Our Director of Music, Jonathan Holmes, is continuing the free lunchtime Bach organ recitals in the new year. Come along on Tuesday 19 January at 1.05pm to enjoy some socially distanced Bach.

The requirements of cleaning and airing the building make several services close together on one day more difficult, but no doubt we will return to a busier Sunday schedule during 2021 when we can and when there is demand. Early in the new year I hope to restart the Tuesday 10am Holy Communion service.

I expect the regulations mandating face coverings in church (except if exempt) will remain for a time as the vaccine is administered, even for those who have themselves had the vaccine, and am grateful to everyone for co-operating in this regard.

Your friend and Parish Priest

Russell Dewhurst



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CAN BIRDS PLAY A PART IN MUSIC?

Have you noticed how often composers use birds in their music? It may be in the titles: one immediately thinks of 'Swan Lake'; or else the music alludes to a character of a bird. A prime example of the latter could be 'la Cygne' (the swan) in 'Carnival of the Animals' or even the Duck who appears in 'Peter and the Wolf' by Prokofiev. Another thing is that it was quite fashionable for composers, writing in Renaissance and Baroque times, to use the harpsichord which can make a variety of chirping and other birdlike sounds. Some more recent composers made use of the descriptive element of bird sounds, for example, our familiar Great Tit. The Austrian composer Anton Bruckner evidently knew the Great Tit for he does not so much quote as suggest its song in his music. In more modern times, the French organist and composer Olivier Messiaen was well-known for his love for birds. We can think about some of these matters in subsequent editions of EPN; for now, I want to approach the idea from a different angle, and see how a composer can make his bird calls meld into the overall sound of his orchestra so as to bring to life - in the concert hall - something of the innate power or grandeur of the landscape in his homeland. .

Jean Sibelius had, to my mind, this gift in a way unequalled by anyone else. None of his pieces for orchestra employ particularly large forces, unlike some of his contemporaries, yet he can make his average-sized symphony orchestra shake with the gales and blizzards of the frozen Finnish plains or make gaunt spectres from the mythological past haunt his woodwind and brass figurations. On 21st April 1915 Sibelius was privileged to see sixteen wild swans. They would have been Whooper Swans and not our familiar Mute Swans of our parks and lakes. Whooper Swans are just as large, with pure white plumage, but carry their necks straight at all times. In flight, these swans make a loud, far-carrying bugling sound; I once heard two calling and that was haunting enough. Imagine the sound of

sixteen! Sibelius was luckier than he realised for, in 1915, the fortunes of Whooper Swans in Finland had sunk to an all-time low. Since then their numbers have greatly increased. Recently it was voted Finland's 'National Bird'.



What strikes me as incredible is the fact that Whooper Swans, when on migration, can fly stratospherically high. Aeroplane pilots have reported seeing them at 37,000 feet. They were Icelandic birds coming to the relatively mild climate of Britain for the winter. It is known that they can make this journey in one go, as it were, without stopping off.

Might we ever be fortunate enough to see these wonderful birds in Ewell? Alas, no. They breed on the far side of the Arctic Circle and spend winter in Scotland, and northern England. But if you listen to the finale of Sibelius' Fifth Symphony, and hear all the French horns in full cry, you will gain some compensation and visualise, in the music, something of what Sibelius himself experienced.

TT

PCC REPORT

The PCC met on 1 December via Zoom.

News from the Finance team was still not great – the monthly deficit is still running at around £7,000 with online donations beginning to fall. The diocese has agreed to a slight reduction in the payment of the annual Parish Share, which will be of some help.

Russell spent some time explaining the plans for forthcoming services. Last year 3,000 plus people attended the many school and church services over the Christmas period, but sadly this year will be very different. However, the members were very excited to hear about the return of the 9.30am communion service, which will also be live streamed. Six teams of two volunteers are being sought to operate the AV system. Please consider helping if you can - training will be provided.

A fair amount of time was spent discussing the problem

of unsafe headstones in the churchyards. Some 60 to 70 need urgent attention and although they are the responsibility of the families, when they can't be located, the liability to make them safe falls to the PCC. The members voted in favour of seeking a faculty for permission to lay them down until another solution can be found.

They also voted in favour of applying for a faculty to seek permission to go ahead with repairs to the leaking church roof before the winter weather causes more damage.

Progress is being made with the new website for the Hall. The Working Party are seeking photographs of events in the Hall which can be used on the website. Please contact Ian Burgess if you can help.

As I'm writing this in early December, I hope you and your families have enjoyed your Christmas, and wish you a happy and healthy New Year.

*Liz Divall
PCC Secretary*

A THOUGHT FOR EPIPHANY

I remember going to a study day in Guildford some years ago – one of those days aimed at encouraging us on our Christian journey. The speaker was an engaging chap, who began by telling us about a Peanuts comic strip he had seen. In it, Charlie Brown and Snoopy are standing on the deck of a cruise liner, Charlie Brown holding a folded deckchair.

They had evidently chosen the spot to sit and relax. “Which way do you want to face?”, asked Snoopy. “Backwards, so we can see where we have been, or forwards, so we can see where we are headed?” Charlie Brown thinks for a moment, and replies: “Well, just for now I don’t even know how to open my deckchair!”

The message the speaker wanted to convey, of course, was that although we may have all felt that we should be looking forwards, in truth we might just find ourselves in a bit of a muddle about which way to turn and, if we were rooted to the spot, there was no hope even of organising a comfy seat for ourselves!

As we head into 2021, no doubt many of us will be looking back on this past year, trying to make sense of it all – so many unanswered questions, so much confusion, such a lot of uncertainty – and mind-boggling numbers of the thousands who have suffered illness and death. Many of us may be looking to the New Year with a feeling of some trepidation – how long before the new vaccine takes effect significantly and will we be able to avoid infection in the meantime? We could be forgiven if this New Year’s Eve doesn’t hold quite the expectation that we have experienced in past years.

However, The Season of Epiphany, which begins on 6 January, reminds us of the part of the Christmas story with which we are all so familiar. In Epiphany, we are invited to step out on a new journey, one full of hope and possibilities. This is no ordinary journey, for we follow in the footsteps of the Magi, those Wise Men who followed the Star which would eventually lead them to the infant Christ. There, as we know, they bowed down in homage, bringing their gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh. Then they returned home. We are not told how their lives changed as a result of this awesome encounter, but what is certain is that they had come face to face with Emmanuel, God with Us.

As we journey together through Epiphany, maybe we needn’t worry too much about whether we are facing backwards or forwards, but instead lift our eyes upwards to the wonder of the Bethlehem Star, which promises to lead us to discover the presence of Christ in our everyday lives. We may be surprised to find him often in the most unexpected places, and with the most unlikely people, and we must also be open to the possibility that he may be found within each of us, wherever we happen to be (even if we are unable to open our deckchair!).

Maggie

Prayers for January



O Lord,

With everything that has happened worldwide during the past year - the global pandemic being a major influence on all our lives - we are grateful to have reached the beginning of a New Year, when the past can be put behind us and the coming months offer fresh promise of better things to come.

At the beginning of this New Year, help us to remember afresh the story and to be like those wise men who sought an earthly king but were instead led to a humble stable and found you, the One born to bring freedom, forgiveness and a hope of heaven. Like them, may we also be led to that Light, to you who opens eyes to understanding God's Word and Truth.

Lord, you make all things new; you bring hope alive in our hearts and cause our spirits to be born again. Thank you for this New Year; for all the potential it holds. We ask that you guide our decisions and turn our hearts to deeply desire you above all else.

We ask for your wisdom, for your strength and power to be constantly present within us. We pray that you will make us strong and courageous for what may still prove to be a particularly difficult road ahead. Give us ability beyond what we feel able and let your gifts flow freely through us, so that you may be honoured by our lives and others be drawn to you.

AMEN

FROM OUR CHILDREN & FAMILIES WORKER

Hi Everyone,

But they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint. Isaiah 40:3

The season of Advent is a time of waiting, and with waiting comes patience. This was definitely a lesson that was re-iterated over the past year. Waiting for schools to open, waiting to return to work, waiting for lockdown to end, waiting to Zoom, Skype or phone our loved ones, waiting for a cuddle, waiting for a test result, a free bed at the hospital, a respirator, another day, waiting for the pandemic to end and most importantly waiting for our Saviour, Jesus Christ to be born.

One thing that waiting forces us to do is to be patient and in the fast-paced lives that we live and the increasingly advancing technology which makes life quicker, easier and seemingly effortless, we have neglected the opportunity for waiting in our lives. The act of being patient. Being still. Slowing down. Breathing. Being present and taking it all in. We need to have time to reflect on what has happened, what is currently happening and what is going to happen and we need to turn to God in these times to ensure that he brings us renewed strength, comfort and guidance. We need to give our impatient thoughts to God and let him replace them with Peace. **I wait for the Lord, more than watchmen wait for the morning, Psalm 130:6**

God invites us to trust in his goodness today and his faithfulness tomorrow. Let's use this new year to give God control of our lives and to guide us on the path that he has laid out before us.

What is taking place at St Mary's Kidz in January

- We will be starting our St Mary's Kidz services back up from January 10
- Children's hour will be also be starting on January 10

I have been eagerly **waiting** to meet all our St Mary's families and I am hoping we will be able to do this early in 2021. I will keep you updated with any additional activities and events taking place via my weekly mail and via the St Mary's Kidz Facebook page.

All the best for the year ahead. I trust that it will be filled with health, happiness, peace, love and patience.

All the best

Sandi

Children and Families worker

Email:families@stmarysewell.com

PHOTOS FROM OUR LIVESTREAMED PARISH EUCHARIST ON 6 DECEMBER



EPN copy dates for 2021

We welcome articles from members of the congregation, especially reports on parish activities. These should be sent to e pn@stmarysewell.com before noon on the following Mondays:

18 Jan	15 Feb	15 Mar
12 Apr	17 May	14 June
12 July	16 Aug	13 Sept
18 Oct	15 Nov	6 Dec

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FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS FUNERALS

Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord

20 November	Brenda Audrey Gardner, aged 91
25 November	John Richard Haynes, aged 103

BACSECT NEWS No 2 – DECEMBER 2020



The School



Handwashing buckets in place



Teachers in PPE



Facemasks are compulsory for the children

Good news! The school is now open again and is full of “face mask wearing” children. The Ministry of Education in The Gambia has set out strict rules to be followed to get a school re opened including restrictions in class sizes and the wearing of face masks by children and the teachers.

The Ministry Education Officer has visited the school and has told them that the safety standards are the best! They are having to turn away some students as there is a limit on the numbers in each class, 25 being the maximum, which is far fewer than in most Gambian Schools.

Through the generosity of our friends at the Parish of St Paul’s and St Mary’s Nork we have been able to pay the teachers whilst the school has been closed and this has enabled the charity to concentrate on the purchase of the new school year’s books and equipment as well as a great deal of Covid protection equipment, some of which we have been able to ship out from the UK.

We are now looking at the possibility of using the new school hall which is on the second floor as an additional classroom but that needs planning as it will involve new desks (not readily available in The Gambia) and all the additional books and equipment as well as extra teachers.

We are hoping to discuss with Richard, the Head Teacher, before Christmas but doing it via Zoom is not easy! We had to cancel our trips in November and January due to Foreign Office restrictions and a lack of flights but we still hope to be able to visit in March next year.

The Gambia has kept the Covid cases to a minimum by the early closing of their borders and airport. That is about to change with tourists starting to return so we hope and pray it will not cause a spike in cases.

On behalf of Richard, the Teachers, and all the pupils we wish everyone who has helped our charity in any way a Happy and Peaceful Christmas and a brighter New Year!

Revd John Baxter
Chair of Trustees

Email: BACSECT@virginmedia.com
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THE ECO-GROUP'S TIPS FOR JANUARY

EcoTip - Now it's winter.

Homes are really important and we included some eco tips for those in December's edition of EPN (on page 8). God calls us to play our part in giving nature a home too. Is your garden lacking a bird feeder ahead of the long winter months when it's particularly hard for wildlife to source food? Could your balcony or windowsill do with some plant life? Even if you don't own the house, you can do your research and make a case to the homeowner for installing a bird box or hedgehog highway. (Though in the latter case, do make sure the neighbours are happy for you to make a small tunnel/hole in your shared fence!). Bug hotels can be homemade from a pile of logs and twigs or there are ones you can buy - either for yourself or as a gift..

If you have any ideas you'd like to feed in or a favourite tip to share please get in touch with the Reverend Sue Ayling:

assistantpriest@stmarysewell.com or 020 8337 6347.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO DECOMPOSE ?

- Paper towel - 2-4 weeks
- Banana peel - 3-4 weeks
- Paper bag - 1 month
- Newspaper - 1.5 months
- Apple core - 2 months
- Cardboard - 2 months
- Cotton glove - 3 months
- Orange peel - 6 months
- Plywood - 1-3 years
- Wool sock - 1-5 years
- Milk carton - 5 years
- Cigarette butt - 10-12 years
- Leather shoe - 25-40 years
- Tinned steel can - 50 years
- Foamed plastic cup - 50 years
- Rubber-boot sole - 50-80 years
- Plastic container - 50-80 years
- Aluminium can - 200-500 years
- Plastic bottle - 450 years
- Disposable nappy - 550 years
- Plastic bag - 200-1000 years



I Love To Live

Today dear Lord, I am 80 and there is so much I have not done.

I hope dear Lord, you'll let me live until I'm 81.

But then, if I haven't finished all I want to do.

Will you please let me stay a while until I'm 82?

So many places I want to go, so very much to see.

Do you think you could manage to make it 83?

The world is changing very fast, there is so much in store

And I'd like it very much to live 'till I'm 84.

And if by then I'm still alive I'd like to stay 'til 85!

By then, who knows what happens next, so I'd really like to stick

And see what happens when I'm 86.

I know, dear Lord it's much to ask

(and it must be nice in heaven)

But I'd really like to stay until I'm 87.

I know by then I won't be fast, and sometimes I'll be late

But it would be so pleasant to be around at 88!

I will have seen so many things. And had a lovely time.

So I'm sure that I'll be willing to leave at 89.

Just one more thing I'd like to say dear Lord

I thank you very kindly,

But if it is ok with you, I'd love to live past 90.

GIVING TO ST MARY'S

As with most churches and charities, the current situation has reduced St Mary's income considerably.

Thank you to all those whose regular giving continues to support St Mary's: it is much appreciated.

If you would like to make an online one-off gift, large or small, it will be very gratefully received by St Mary's. Please visit:

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/donation-web/charity?charityId=1006677>

This link is also on our website.

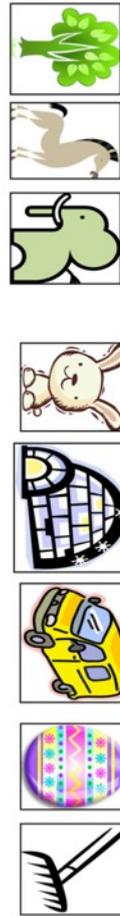
It is possible to pay by text message.

Text EWELL 6 to 70085 to donate £6. Change the 6 to the amount you'd like to give, up to EWELL 20 to give £20. Texts cost your donation plus one standard rate message.

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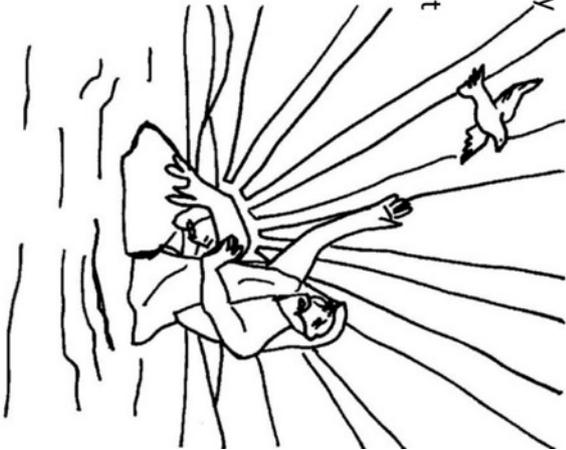
Jesus came to be baptized by John in which river?

Write the first letter of each word to find out



After John had baptized Jesus, the Holy Spirit came down on Jesus.

Join the dots from 1 to 48 to find out how the Holy Spirit appeared



Young Church May

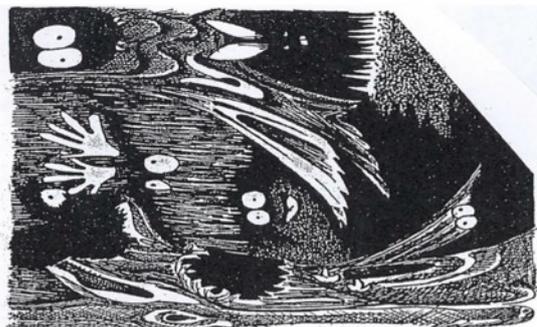
10 January 2021, The Baptism of Christ:: Mark 1: 4-11



John baptises Jesus

Page 10 can be cut out if needed

Let's think about your Baptism ...



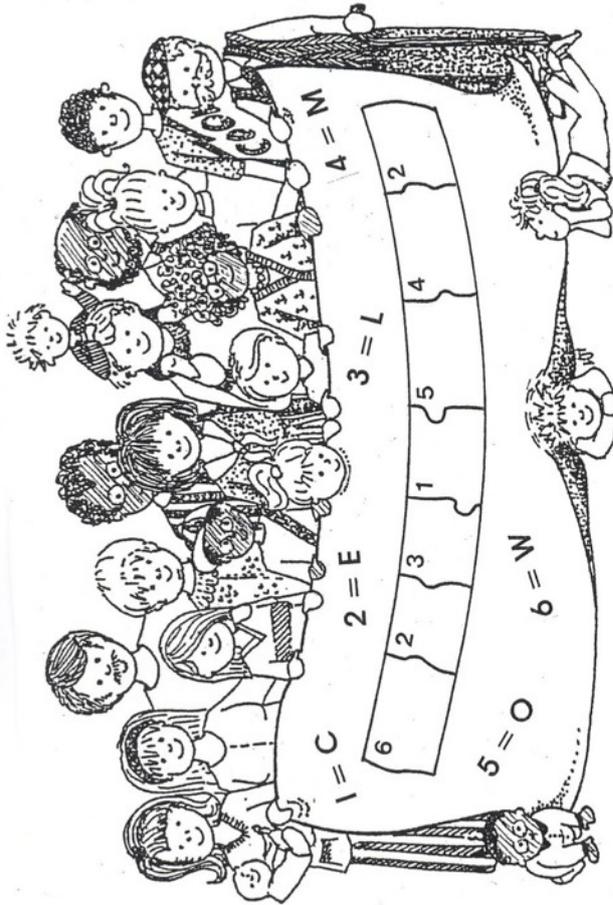
These words were probably said to you at your Baptism.

Can you unjumble them?

ineSh

sa a ghLit ni the rldWo
ot the oryGl fo Gdo

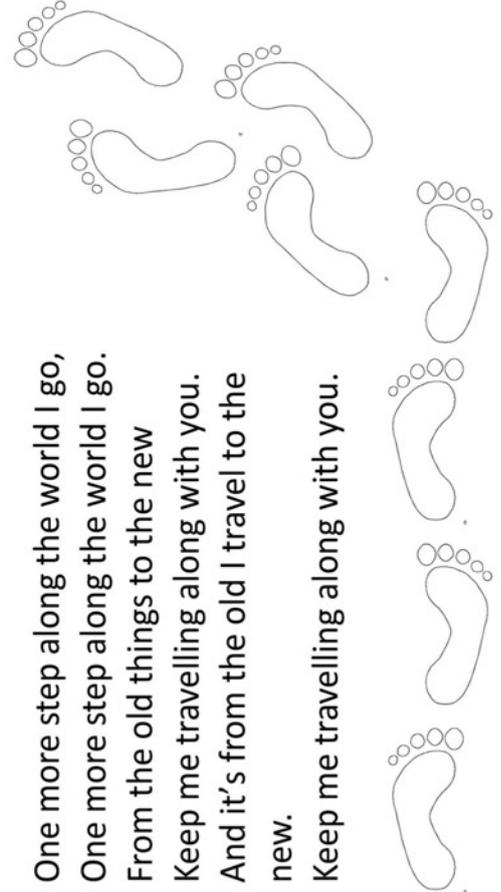
At your Baptism, you are welcomed into the Christian Church



Use the number code to find out what this Banner says to you

One more step along the world I go,
One more step along the world I go.
From the old things to the new
Keep me travelling along with you.
And it's from the old I travel to the new.

Keep me travelling along with you.





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FOOD BANK WISH LIST FOR JANUARY



The Trussell Trust who set up the Food Bank scheme, has worked out with nutritionists to ensure food parcels contain sufficient nutrition for at least three days' worth of healthy, balanced meals for individuals and families. A typical food parcel includes: breakfast cereals, soup, pasta, rice, pasta sauce, tinned beans, tinned meat, tea and coffee, sugar, biscuits and snacks. The dietary

requirements are also taken into consideration for those who, for example, have food allergies. Perhaps when you next buy something to donate to Foodbank, you might like to choose something that is gluten free or suitable for vegetarians.

The following are items not needed at the moment: baked beans, pasta, pulses, cleaning products, tinned soup, tinned tomatoes, tea bags, cereal, jam/honey/marmalade/spread and porridge.

Thank you all for your support.

DB

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Thank you for your support of EPN during the difficult times in 2020.

The Editorial and Production Team hope that you have enjoyed reading EPN in 2020 and finding out more about all that goes on at St Mary's. We try to keep you abreast of our services and the many activities to which you are most cordially invited.

For 2021 EPN copies downloaded and printed copies collected from church or delivered **will both be free**. We are not asking anyone to pay for EPN, but if you like to make a donation to St Mary's that would be appreciated. It is possible to pay by text message.

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ST. MARY'S ON-LINE QUIZZES

We hold on-line quizzes on Wednesday evenings using Zoom. These are fun for all the family, so why not join us? The next two quizzes will be on January 6 and 27. You will need to register using links provided in the Weekly Notes and the Vicar's weekly email to our mailing list. For more details please email zoom@stmarysewell.com.