

St. Paul's Matters

December 2015 / January
2016

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From the Rector:

'The Humans' is a recent book by Matt Haig. The story revolves around a Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge University whose body and mind has been taken over by an alien. Why? Because this particular academic has found the answer to a complex problem that's foxed fellow academics for decades. The alien's 'Superiors' are determined that humanity won't find it out. What's more, the alien race expects their minion to get all records of this remarkable achievement deleted, and they're expected to kill off anyone to whom the Professor has already 'spilled the beans'. However these alien masters haven't counted on the 'infectious', subversive power of love that the Professor hasn't known but which this alien learns to embrace, even to its own cost.

Even for someone who never exactly shined in maths at school, this book makes for a surprisingly good read, not least as Christians worldwide approach another celebration of the birth of eternal Divine Love in fragile human frame, the Babe of Bethlehem. Here's how the alien in Haig's book attempts to fathom the concept of love it observes in the Professor's long-suffering wife:

'Love is what the humans are all about but they don't understand it. If they understood it, then it would disappear ... Love is scary because it pulls you in with an intense force, a supermassive Black Hole which looks like nothing from the outside but from the inside challenges every reasonable thing you know ... It makes you do stupid things – things that defy all logic. The opting for anguish over calm, for mortality over eternity, and for Earth over home.'

Every year we hear those words, 'Love came down at Christmas'. That eternal, wondrous and arguably *ridiculous* story of love is re-ignited by our carols and candlelight. We tell the story about a gift and a timeless promise that we can never fully understand. Even so, God wills that we might catch another glimpse of just how wonderfully illogical and stupid it was for an all-powerful protected God to prove the depths, lengths and heights of love through human powerlessness. Everyone and everything in Creation has another chance to believe that love will indeed conquer this world's finite darkness and evil humanity still endures, often by its own actions.

This promise of love at Christmas has stood the test of time despite everything that humanity relentlessly tries to drown it with; those interminable months of 'fairy-tale' retail advertising that ends abruptly at 4am on Boxing Day when shopping centre doors are pushed open and the sales begin; the deeply ingrained popularity of confining Christmas to a few days of glorious excess just before and just after the 25th December; and the temptation to overly 'kiddify' this eternal, wondrous and arguably *ridiculous* story of love at Christmas. The promise realised 2000 years ago in a smelly old animal out-house demands both an ongoing maturity of thought and tenacity of prayer.

Our 12-day observance of the season of Christmas runs deep in both religious and secular thought having been established by both Church and society. And yet a more ancient tradition encourages us to keep on celebrating the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ all the way to Candlemas (2nd February). That's just less than 40 days, the same period of time that we also keep Lent and Easter. Okay, the turkey will only stretch so far and no doubt we'd be as thoroughly sick of it as the Israelites were with the flaky flatbread God gave them in the wilderness. But if we need such a long time to get our hearts and minds ready to walk the pilgrim road to Calvary and the empty tomb, perhaps we need just as long for this eternal, wondrous and arguably *ridiculous* story to marinade and percolate to dispel the dreary, wintry gloom of January. Christ's

birth sets us off along that same journey that will speak once again of joy, laughter, sorrow, anger, temptation, pain and glory in the footsteps of that 'infant so tender and mild'.

I do hope you enjoy 'The Humans' should I have tickled your curiosity!

May I extend you my hopes and prayers for an eternally wondrous, merry and thoughtful Christmas and New Year.

How to contact our Rector

David can be contacted on 01577 863795 or via e-mail at frdavidkinross@gmail.com

The Rector's hour is usually 3:30pm-4:30pm every Thursday in the Church Office beside the Church. Changes to this will be notified on the Church's website.

David normally takes Friday as his day off

The St Paul's website is www.stpauls-kinross.co.uk

Services during December and January

We aim to be friendly and welcoming **to all age groups** and hope our worship speaks to everyone who is interested in making a journey of faith.

Children are equally welcome to stay in church during the service or go to the Meeting Room for Sunday School and everyone is particularly invited to stay together during our monthly 'Whole Church' services.

We usually use the 1982 Liturgy on Sunday mornings but also enjoy trying out experimental worship for special events throughout the year. We will also be introducing a monthly service of Evensong from the Book of Common Prayer.

If you would like to give us a try, we look forward to meeting and greeting you and hope that you might enjoy becoming part of this faithful family of Christ.

The Church is open and available for anyone to sit quietly on days and times when you see our wooden cross displayed at the front of church with other information attached.

Mondays and Wednesdays

8am Morning Prayer, said quietly in the side chapel. All very welcome.

Tuesdays

(except 3rd week) 2.30pm Midweek Holy Communion.

(3rd Wednesday) 12.30pm Lunch, Meditative Reflection and Holy Communion.

All baptized Christians are welcome to receive Communion.

Thursdays

3.30pm – 4.30pm The Rector is in the Church Office (in the old black tin hall) if you would like to see a member of the clergy for any reason.

Other special services and events will be advertised on our website.

SERVICES AND EVENTS IN DECEMBER:

Sunday 29th NOVEMBER: Advent Sunday (*Hope*)

8.30am 1662 BCP Holy Communion

11am Sung Eucharist for the beginning of Advent

The lighting of the Advent Candles and decorating the Jesse Tree by the Sunday School throughout Advent

6.30pm ADVENT CAROL SERVICE

Sunday 6th: Advent 2 (*Bethlehem and the way of the Prophets*)

8.30am 1662 BCP Holy Communion

11am Sung Eucharist followed by the St Paul's AGM in the Meeting Room

Wednesdays 9th and 16th

7.30pm – 9pm Choir rehearsal for the Christmas Carols service in the Meeting Room

Sunday 13th: Advent 3 (*Gaudete Sunday and John the Baptist*)

8.30am 1662 BCP Holy Communion

11am Whole Church Sung Eucharist with narrated Nativity Tableau

4pm Kinross Churches Together Christmas Carol Service at the Campus

Saturday 19th:

2.00 – 3.30pm Choir rehearsal for Christmas Carol Service in the Meeting Room at St Paul's

4pm CHRISTINGLE SERVICE

Sunday 20th: Advent 4 (*The Virgin Mary*)

8.30am 1662 BCP Holy Communion

11am Sung Eucharist

6.30pm ST PAUL'S CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE

CHRISTMAS EVE

11.30pm MIDNIGHT MASS

CHRISTMAS DAY

8.45am 1662 BCP Said Matins

10am FAMILY SUNG EUCHARIST

Sunday 27th: THE HOLY INNOCENTS

8.30am Holy Communion (1982)

11am Sung Eucharist

SERVICES AND EVENTS IN JANUARY 2016:

Sunday 3rd: 2nd Sunday of Christmas

8.30am Service of the Word

11am Sung Eucharist

Sunday 10th: The Epiphany of the Lord (transferred from the 6th)

8.30am Holy Communion

11am Whole Church Sung Eucharist followed by Festivities and Food afterwards in the Meeting Room

Sunday 17th: 2nd Sunday after the Epiphany

8.30am Holy Communion

11am Sung Eucharist

Sunday 24th: THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

8.30am Holy Communion

11am 'Pulpit Swap' Service of the Word

Preacher: The Reverend Lis Stenhouse, Cleish & Fossoway

Sunday 31st: CANDLEMAS SUNDAY

8.30am Holy Communion

11am Sung Eucharist

Clubs, meeting groups and societies

We are fortunate in the fact that the number of meeting groups, clubs and other societies is growing and new members, of course are always welcome, but whom would you contact for details of a particular group, or , if you wanted to set up a new group how would you advertise it. Well now those problems are solved, look here. I would like to publish, each month, contact details of each of our meeting groups, and for new groups, details of what they plan to do. I plan that this section will just be a contact list, a directory, any articles expanding on the activities of any of the groups will still be welcome and will be published in the main text of the magazine with a link for online readers included. So to start:

| Group | What | When, where | Contact | Article? |
|---|--------------------------------|--|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Thursday Morning Group | Discussion group, | Thursdays 10:00am, Meeting room | Jan Campbell | here |
| Traidcraft | Sales stall | After 11.00am service, 3 rd Sunday each month, Meeting room | Pat Payne | here |
| Healing | Prayer group, | 10.00am 1 st Monday each month, Meeting room | Fr David | No |
| Visiting | To visit people who are unwell | Homes, hospital, etc. | Sue Jones | No |
| Flowers | Church decoration | Weekly | Christina Rodger | here |
| Book club | Discussion group | monthly | Nan Kennedy, Jan Campbell | here |
| Men's Breakfast Group (Fossoway and Cleish) | Discussion group | Monthly, Fossoway Church hall | Colin McIntosh | here |

I am happy to expand this to include groups outwith St Paul's so if you want an "external" society to be included please send me the details.

Traidcraft

Pat Payne has asked me to remind you all that the 3rd Sunday of every month is a Fair Trade Sunday when a selection of Fair trade goods will be available to buy in the meeting room.

From the Vestry

Well, as you would anticipate vestry have been concentrating on AGM preparations, the AGM is important and I urge as many of you as possible to attend, immediately after the 11:00am service on Sunday 6th of December.

Other matters continue to require our attention;

Our finances are in a very bad way, we are predicting a deficit over the next three years and that is not a good place to be. Over the past year we have reduced our spend on heating and lighting (new contract with our suppliers), on Insurance, on our website and on many small, but in savings context, important items, unfortunately our income has remained, at best, static and despite our efforts our overall spend has exceeded our income. Vestry are aware of the situation and are working with the Diocese to increase our income but this initiative is still early days, we will not know if we have been successful in our bid for assistance until 2016. I am tempted to say we are in the hands of the Gods but perhaps that is promoting +David and the Diocesan Administrative Board a bit too far.

You will have noticed that we have recently suffered a severe flood and this is another issue that concerns Vestry. The floods and the state of the church grounds was discussed in depth (oops, sorry about the pun!) at our last vestry meeting and the following was decided:

The flooding is serious and will require potentially expensive action to resolve. We should do all we can to reduce the impact of the problem and to that end Vestry agreed that with immediate effect all drivers are requested NOT to use the Church grounds for parking.

There will of course be exceptions; funeral and wedding cars and blue badge drivers should be allowed access as at present (floods allowing) and when there is a rugby tournament we may have to park in the church grounds but please do not drive round the church, I'm sure we can cope with boxing each other in if necessary. Vehicles with disabled passengers are requested to drive to the front door to discharge their passengers near to the church door and then to reverse back to turn round and exit the grounds normally, please DO NOT drive round the church to exit the grounds.

We strongly request that no vehicle drive round the church. Parking is possible in the rugby club car park (when it is not flooded!) and across the road on the open ground. If these measures are not adopted we face the prospect of funeral and wedding vehicles not being able to access the

grounds at all. Vestry are currently liaising with P&K Council for a solution to the problem.

Book Club

Did you know we have a book club? Well we do and I've persuaded them to come out from behind the sofa (reading too many scary books) and tell us what they're doing.

Currently they are reading "Six Black Candles" by Des Dillon. I am told this is a darkly humorous and satanic fictional brew, obviously a strong contender for a church book club! But the critics say it's an exciting entertaining and at times farcically funny so perhaps I'll just keep quiet.

The book club meet regularly, usually at Jan Campbell's home, so if you want to find out speak to Jan, or to Nan or Beryl who are both members.

Sunday School

Birthday wishes to:

Tom Normile who's birthday is on December 29th

Josie Fryer, whose birthday is on January 23rd

Ben Normile, whose birthday is on January 28th

And a happy birthday to any grownups who may be too shy to share their birthdays with us.

Fossway and Cleish Men's Breakfast Group

We are a group of men who meet for food, for fellowship and for discussion.

We meet on the Saturdays listed below in Fossway Church Hall. We gather at 8.30am for a cooked breakfast {cost f3} and then share an hour's discussion on some topic of contemporary religious interest or concern. Meetings always end at 10am promptly.

There is no membership involved and anyone is welcome to attend a meeting which may be of interest to them. Being part of the Group does not imply an affiliation with any church. It is simply designed for those who are attracted by the opportunity to explore some of the spiritual concerns of today in an open-minded, stimulating and challenging way.

New friends are always welcome. All that is required is to let us know you are coming, so that breakfast can be provided.

And the breakfast is good!

Here is our programme for the next few months

10 October 'What about these Muslims?'

A Discussion on Christianity's different attitudes to other faiths led by Colin McIntosh

21 November 'The Clergy yesterday, today and tomorrow'

A Talk by the Rev Dan Harper
{Dan grew up in Fossoway and has now completed
training as a Church of Scotland minister)

12 December 'Can the Moderator of the General Assembly 'make a
difference' during his/her year in office?'

Speaker - The Very Rev John Chalmers, immediate past
Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland
Joint Meeting - visit to St. Margaret's Dunfermline

No Meeting in January

20 February 'Workplace Chaplaincy'
A Talk by Rev Tony Bryer, City Centre Workplace Chaplain in
Edinburgh

19 March 'Good and Bad Religion'
A Discussion led by the Very Rev James Simpson

16 April 'Maker of Heaven and Earth - is he?'
A Discussion on what it means to speak of God as Creator
Speaker to be arranged

14 May A Discussion led by Rev Lis Stenhouse, Minister of Cleish and
Fossoway. Topic to be announced

Further information can be provided by contacting:

Colin McIntosh 01577 840012
colinmcintosh4@btinternet.com

Thursday Morning Group

10am Tea and coffee for 10.30am start

St Paul's Meeting Room (apart from the last Thursday of the month)

Having finished studying the stories of Nehemiah and Ezra the members are
taking turns to present their researches into Christmas traditions in other
countries – quite a change of focus. We didn't think we could face le Reveillon
Christmas feast eaten after Midnight Mass and starting with oysters, foie gras,
escargots, smoked salmon and champagne! An Advent study will be in order
soon with New Testament content in the New Year. Thursday Morning
Christmas Celebration is on 17th December. Further information from Sue
Jones, Jan Campbell, Fr David

200 Club draw

The winners of the October draw were

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 st prize | Linda Anderson |
| 2 nd prize | Patrick Strang-Steel |
| 3 rd prize | Beryl Searle |

Congratulations to all.

When your membership is due for renewal you will receive a renewal notice.
Many thanks to those people who return their forms and cheques promptly, and

if you haven't yet returned yours, could you please do so as soon as possible. There are still plenty of numbers left if anyone else would like to join the club

Church Flowers

The Flower Diary is at the back of church if you want to give flowers on a certain Sunday, I will put the new diary into Church for Advent as usual.

Easter I early this year (27th March) so early warning - the usual collection for Flowers for Easter will take place nearer to the date, probably around Mothering Sunday (6th March).

Christina Rodger 01577 863785 or christina@westerloan.plus.com

Kinross Food Bank

Over recent months St. Paul's and a charity called Broke not Broken have been discussing the possibility of setting up a Food Bank for Kinross and the surrounding area. Regrettably there is a need for such a resource and we at St. Paul's are keen to help. We are in the final process of setting up our Old Church Hall premises as the distribution centre for the Food Bank. There are a number of points still to be resolved but we are trying to open before the end of the year.

The intention is to open twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays between the hours of 10am and 2pm. As with all good intentions we need volunteers for all of the sessions which we intend to divide into 10am to 12noon and 12noon to 2pm on each day. Nesta has agreed to help as has Charmian Reid and Christine and myself will also be volunteering. If you can offer some time to this worthwhile project then please contact me on malaiafli@emx.com or 01383 223004. Broke not Broken also has a list of volunteers who will help.

With all volunteers some training will be necessary to ensure that we comply with Health and Safety regulations and understand how a Food Bank works. We intend to make sure that anyone who needs to use the Food Bank is looked after not only when they call in but after they leave too. We will offer a drink and a chat to those who want it and point them in the right direction if they have problems that other agencies may be able to help with. Privacy and Data Protection is paramount but a friendly face will be well received also.

So, can you help? Even if you cannot volunteer then you could donate food to the cause. If you are not sure what to donate there is a list of suitable food in church to look at. So what can we at St. Paul's do? Please contact me and help us help the people of Kinross.

Peter Croft

Kinross Churches Together

Carol Singing with KCT is expected to be on Sat 19th Dec in Sainsbury's from 11 to 12. Tbc

Pulpit Exchange on 24th January 2016 celebrating the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity_ Preacher from Cleish and Fossoway will visit St Paul's. Fr David will preach at Orwell and Portmoak. A reader from St Paul's will visit

Cleish and Fossoway (volunteer wanted) while we will have a reader supplied by St James'. The customary service will be a shared concert event with Leven Voices in aid of Syrian refugees. 3 – 5pm on the 24th

From Jim

Recently I took over the running of the Mid-week Worship Group which meets at the Church centre here in Kinross. It was set up by the Rev Leslie Barr of the Church of Scotland way back in the 1970s and the original group consisted of people from churches, including St Paul's, within Kinross-shire.

Our service is made up of the usual elements of a non-communion service led by clergy or lay led and normally lasts some 30 minutes. It takes place in the reading room. Communion services take place 3 or 4 times a year and for some this is the only opportunity they have to take communion. The congregation consists of mainly retired ladies but also a few men and some younger people. This mid-week service is an arm of the Kinross Parish Church family and all Christians are very welcome. Any monies collected during the services are distributed among charities chosen by group poll, recently three charities have together shared £600, each receiving £200.

Now the important facts:

| | |
|----------|-----------------------|
| Place | Kinross Church centre |
| Time | 10:45 for 11:00 start |
| Day | Every Wednesday |
| Duration | 30 minutes |

On 2nd December the service will be led by our own Fr David and, of course, all are welcome.

Letters

From the Editor

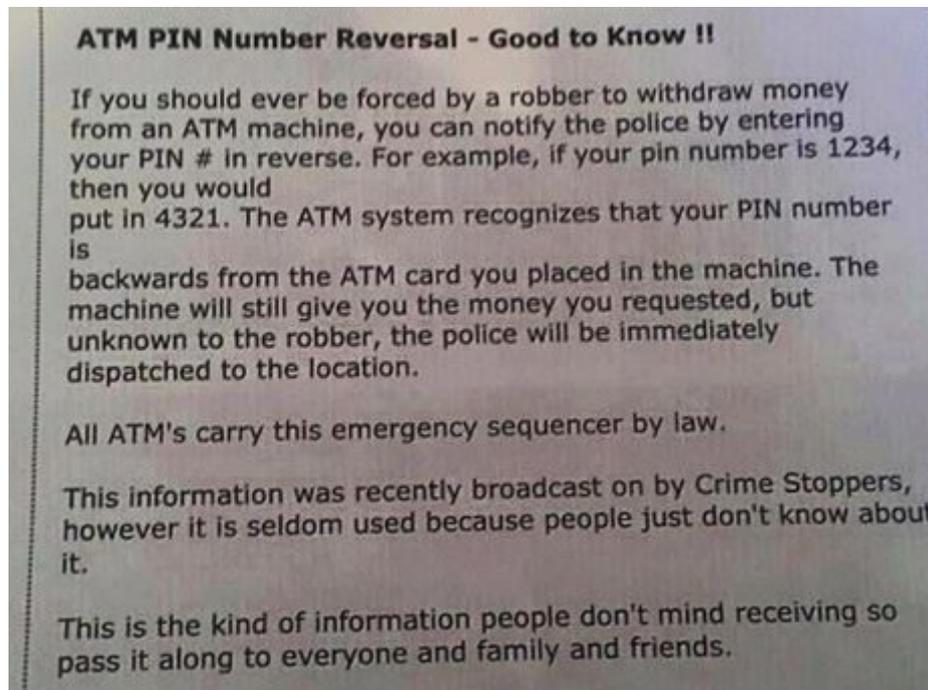
The first refugees have now arrived in Scotland. The weather to greet them was appalling, even for us who are used to our weather it was bad, for them it must have felt that they had been moved to a polar region. We joked at the time that the weather was so bad that we would not have been surprised if they had turned round, got back on the plane and take us back to the warm Mediterranean!

Joking, and weather, aside what sort of reception did they, and will they, get from us, the Scots? The official reception will I am sure, be correct, cover all the physical and as many of the mental and social needs of the new arrivals as it can, but what of the social reception, the acceptance by us of the people involved? There have already, in the light of the Paris atrocities, been calls that they should not be allowed here. Already statements that they are taking over empty houses that should be assigned to homeless Scots, and calls that they should be denied benefits. It makes me ashamed to hear these comments. They are not taking over houses that should be assigned to homeless scots, they are being housed in accommodation for the homeless. Where they are being given new homes, in Rothesay for instance, these homes have been

empty for long periods and their allocation to new families increases the population of Bute and the pupils numbers in the local schools, which I heard may have been closed due to low pupil numbers.

We are to receive some refugees in Clackmannanshire, we don't know how many or when but preparations are underway for them to be welcomed and assimilated into our society. Initiatives are in place in our local schools to provide for the new pupils, many of whom will be confused, scared, not speak our language, or understand what is happening to them. The Scots children involved are very excited and looking forward to welcoming their new colleagues. I have heard them talking about it, there is none of negativity heard in some of the adult comments, none of the hostility, there is hope, anticipation, and joy- yes joy, that they can help. I think on this subject we should listen to and learn from our children.

Here's something that's good to know, I hope you never need to use this facility but knowing of it gives just a little extra comfort in a world that can be very dangerous.



And Finally

A Health and Safety Xmas..

Please be advised that all employees planning to dash through the snow in a one-horse open sleigh, going over the fields and laughing all the way are required to undergo a Risk Assessment addressing the safety of open sleighs. This assessment must also consider whether it is appropriate to use only one horse for such a venture, particularly where there are multiple passengers. Please note that permission must also be obtained in writing from landowners before their fields may be entered. To avoid offending those not participating in celebrations, we request that laughter is moderate only and not loud enough to be considered a noise nuisance.

Benches, stools and orthopaedic chairs are now available for collection by any shepherds planning or required to watch their flocks at night.

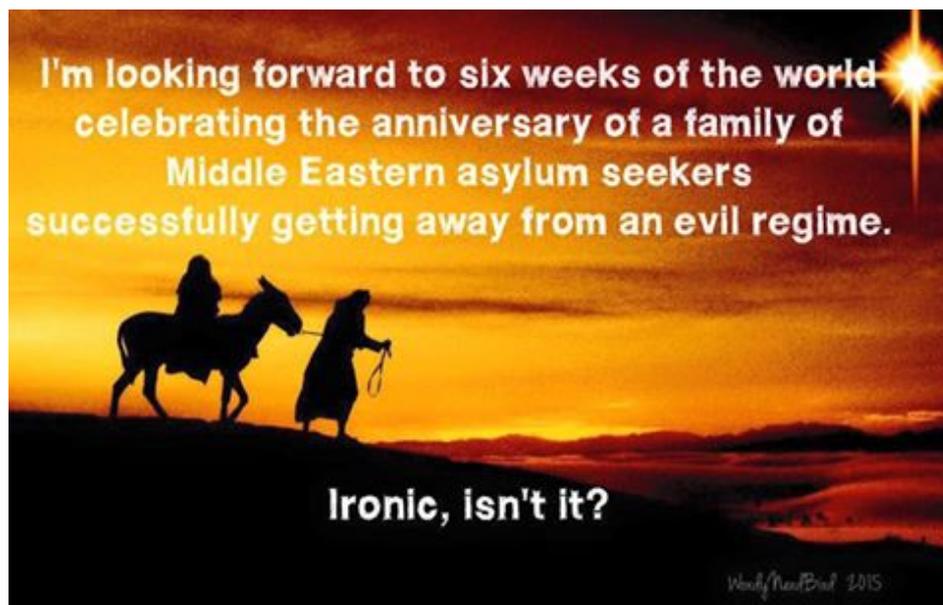
While provision has also been made for remote monitoring of flocks by CCTV cameras from a centrally heated shepherd observation hut, all facility users are reminded that an emergency response plan must be submitted to account for known risks to the flocks. The angel of the Lord is additionally reminded that prior to shining his/her glory all around s/he must confirm that all shepherds are wearing appropriate Personal Protective Equipment to account for the harmful effects of UVA, UVB and the overwhelming effects of Glory.

Following last year's well publicised case, everyone is advised that EC legislation prohibits any comment with regard to the redness of any part of Mr. R. Reindeer. Further to this, exclusion of Mr. R Reindeer from reindeer games will be considered discriminatory and disciplinary action will be taken against those found guilty of this offence.

While it is acknowledged that gift-bearing is commonly practised in various parts of the world, particularly the Orient, everyone is reminded that the bearing of gifts is subject to Hospitality Guidelines and all gifts must be registered. This applies regardless of the individual, even royal personages. It is particularly noted that direct gifts of currency or gold are specifically precluded under provisions of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. Further, caution is advised regarding other common gifts, such as aromatic resins that may initiate allergic reactions.

Finally, in the recent case of the infant found tucked up in a manger without any crib for a bed, Social Services have been advised and will be arriving shortly.

Merry Christmas.



For January

Next Magazine is the February 2016 issue, the cut-off date is week commencing 17th January, absolute and final cut off is 24th January. Please don't leave your submissions to the last moment, getting the magazine produced, printed, and distributed is always a hectic process and last minute submissions run the risk of being omitted if we are to meet our print deadlines.

Comments, articles or suggestions for future magazine editions are always welcome, please speak to me in church or e-mail them to me at jonsearle@btinternet.com