St Thomas Ploughshare

Volume 31 Edition 1

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Cover Photo provided by Abi Akehurst

A New Year Coming Josie Chamings

A new year always provides an opportunity to think and reflect on the year gone by, and look with expectancy to the year ahead. Some years as I've done this I've been more than glad to say goodbye to the year! Others I've been quite amazed at how much has happened and changed in such a short space of time.



One of the ways that we learn from our experiences is by being curious about how the choices we have made and the things we have done have made an impact on us.

The quality of curiosity is defined as 'an eager desire to learn or know about something'. It's connected to exploration, investigation, and learning and is central to all aspects of human development. It's how we learn new things about the world and ourselves and, acquire new skills.

Last Christmas my baby niece was beginning to learn that she had hands. She was utterly captivated by her own fingers as she lay underneath our Christmas tree, and accidentally caught a bauble as she stretched out her arms. So much wonder was contained in that moment as she explored her new-found limbs and skills.

Curiosity is wonder, wonder is joy, and joy is its own kind of freedom.

How curious are you about the world around you? How curious are you about how you are growing and changing as the years pass you by?

I wonder if there are questions you have about yourself or the world that you've left untouched - could this year be a time to begin to dig

into those questions again?

It is so easy the further away we move from full time education to think that our learning for life is done, but the kind of life that God invites us in to is a life of continuous learning.

At the time Jesus was on earth it was common for Rabbi's (teachers of religion) to have a few disciples (students). These were individuals who followed round their Rabbi and copied everything they did. They sat at their Rabbi's feet to learn from them directly as they taught about the religious laws and their meaning, and they followed their daily routines.

Christian faith means being invited by Jesus into a relationship where we become his students. Though we don't follow him round physically in the same way as disciples did their Rabbi, we are to continually learn from him, through reading the words of the Bible and in learning to pray, being changed from the inside out by the Holy Spirit.

The best lives are curious lives: living as though there is always something new to learn about people and the world helps us to grow and move with the world.

So, this new year, how could you be curious about the world? Could you be curious about someone you know a little bit about but could know better?

May your new year be full of the wonder that comes with being curious.

Thoms Blokes Newsletter - Issue No 30 Robin Dawson

Thom's Blokes meets monthly, usually on the third Tuesday at St Thomas' Church Centre for talks, outings, fun and friendship. Our last meeting of the year, which will have taken place by the time you read this will be our Christmas Dinner at the Church Centre. It's an awesome sight T



ner at the Church Centre. It's an awesome sight Thom's Blokes tucking in!

The dinner will be the last meeting of 2023's varied programme of interesting talks and epic visits. Our last visit, in October, was to the Great British Car Journey at Ambergate. Mark Hoare provided this account:

Thoms' Blokes Visit to the Great British Car Journey

In October eighteen blokes drove to Ambergate to visit the Great British Car Journey Museum. Ironically not one of the cars we travelled in was actually British!

The museum features over 130 classic British cars and took us through the golden ages of British car design and manufacturing, starting with the Austin Seven, through to the Morris Minor, classic Mini, Ford Escort, Rolls Royce and everything in between. It evokes the times when British cars ruled the roads. There are also cars you can drive -called 'Drive Dad's Car'.

The museum is laid out in 'chapters' that tell the fascinating story of the pioneers, entrepreneurs and industrialists that built the British motor industry. To help guide us round and give us more information we were each provided with a tablet, which gave an audio recording of what we were looking at.

As soon as we walked in most of us were overwhelmed by waves of nostalgia. 'This was the car I passed my test in', 'This the one we used to go on holiday in', 'This the one I broke down on the M1 in' and 'This was the one I did 100mph in' were just some of the comments. However, we then remembered 'This is the car that would never start', 'Would leak', 'Fell apart due to rust', 'Was so uncomfortable' 'Was so slow'!

Looking at the cars it also reminded us of how big and heavy and

crudely they were built compared to today's cars. For me the highlights were some of the cars I used to own, an Anglia, Escort, Imp, Dolomite, Montego and Carlton. Also, there is Princess Anne's last Scimitar, Baden Powell's Rolls Royce and even a Sinclair C5! A thoroughly good day out.



Carbon Footprint

The final talk of our year was in November when Cliff Lea came to talk to us about the climate emergency. I don't think we needed much convincing after seeing what the River Hipper has got up to down the road. So the major part of Cliff's talk was about what we could do to reduce our carbon footprint. He gave us an outline of the carbon cycle so that we could understand where the carbon was produced and where it went to.

Going on a cruise was considered very bad form as the carbon footprint of a cruise liner is enormous, but more surprisingly eating of cheap beef was not a good thing either. It is better to eat more expensive grass-fed beef. The cheap beef is produced on feed lots with all the feed imported long distances. Grass has a negative carbon footprint. Cliff asked us also to consider the carbon footprint of the

processes used to make something that we use, and also the carbon footprint of the eventual disposal.

Talks about the climate emergency often leave a person feeling guilty. We must thank Cliff for making the talk interesting enough to quieten down our feelings of guilt, except maybe for those of us who go on cruises!

Paul Robertshaw

Thom's Blokes lost a member recently with the death of Paul Robertshaw. A number of members of Thom's Blokes attended his funeral at the Chesterfield Crematorium. Paul had been a lutenist (violin maker) in his spare time. He was also much involved in the musical life of Chesterfield, particularly the Chesterfield Symphony Orchestra. The funeral was accompanied by a small group of musicians all playing on instruments made by Paul.

2024 Programme

Thom's Blokes' programme for next year has now been published. Copies are available at the Church Centre, alternatively email me and I will send you a copy. There is the usual varied list of talks and visits. Our traditional first meeting of the year will be down at the Chesterfield Bowl on Storforth Lane on Tuesday 16 January at 10.15. There will be bowling, pool and prizes! Thom's Blokes bowling day is usually when the first proper cold spell of the new year starts!

Joke of the month

You may recall that in the last issue of TBN I had to apologise for the poor quality of the joke of the month. A very kind person has supplied me with a new source to draw from. There are quite a few good jokes in it, so to compensate for the previous low quality here are two;

- · What is red and white and travels at 500mph? The jam sandwich in an airline pilot's packed lunch.
- · What contains two egg sandwiches and a Kit Kat, and hangs around a French cathedral? The lunch pack of Notre Dame.

Both about food eh?

So that is all for this issue. If you want to know anything about Thom's Blokes or anything else get in touch with me at jrdawson07@btinternet.com, or 07910821663.

Photograph Provided by Robin Dawson

The 'Lunar Halo' Cassie Wainwright

The cover photo shows an incredible natural phenomenon, a 'Lunar Halo' above St Thomas Church in November.



I had the luck of being at a group meeting with Abi, who captured the photo, in the church centre on the chilly night that halo appeared and witnessed the beautiful and unusual sight.

The ring around the moon is caused by ice crystals forming in high clouds, then light from the moon refracting off of them.

Isn't God's World surprising and beautiful.

Prayers Connecting Charlotte Baldwin

Father God,

We pray this morning for our Church family here at St Thomas'. Thank you that you know us all intimately. You know what we are grateful for and what challenges we are facing. We pray for



healing where healing is needed, peace where peace is needed and comfort where comfort is needed. Sustain us Father in the roles you have given us in our homes, at work and within our community. Help us to seek out opportunities to take your love and your word to those in our lives who are yet to know you.

We thank you Father for those who hold positions of responsibility here at Church. We thank you that through their skills and dedication we can enjoy Church life together. We pray that you give them renewed energy and wisdom in delivering your message to us.

We thank you specifically for the work of Joel and his team in nurturing and teaching our children and young people. Thank you for the energy and ideas that help them to engage our youth with the truth of who you are. Please protect this precious ministry that encourages our children and young people to develop their own relationships with you.

Father God,

We pray this morning for our community here in Chesterfield. For those who have been affected by the recent floods. For those whose homes and businesses have been damaged leaving them in temporary accommodation or without an income. We specifically pray for families with children that are now living in hotels and those who are suffering with ill health and can't be at home. Father, we can't imagine the desperation and worry they must be feeling so we pray you give them your peace and your comfort. We pray that those around them would

be a support either practically or emotionally. Help us individually and as a Church to know how best to serve those affected.

We pray for those in our community who continue to be affected by the cost of living crisis. For those who worry about putting the heating on or who are struggling to feed their children. We pray Father that you would ease this burden for them. Thank you for the work of organisations such as The Foodbank, Gussie's Kitchen and all the warm spaces across Chesterfield which are meeting the needs of so many. Please sustain these projects during this winter season.

In Jesus name we pray. Amen

Father God,

We come to you this morning with heavy hearts. We pray for the innocent Jews, Muslims and Christians caught up in the war between Gaza and Israel. For those who are bereaved by the fighting, we pray for your comfort. For those who are held as hostages, we pray for your courage. For the Israeli soldiers fighting Hamas, we pray for your wisdom. For all the innocent people, we pray for your peace.

Father, we pray that your spirit is moving in Gaza. We pray for an end to this war. For the hostages to be released and for people of Gaza to be able to rebuild their lives. In the meantime, please enable aid organisations to access those who have been displaced and provide much needed water, food and medical supplies.

We pray for the children caught up in the violence. Stay with them Father. Shield them from the horrors of war where possible. For those who have lost their parents we pray you would deliver them to safety. Help them to know, to feel, your love for them.

Father, you sent your son Jesus to cover this world with his love and his blood. As we stand here with this circle of string, we pray that you

would continue to pour your love and your mercy on this broken world.

In Jesus name we pray. Amen



This prayer was read in church 05/11/2023

As the prayers were being read, the congregation linked pieces of red string until all pieces were joined.

Ten Questions with.... Josie

Who are you and what is your role? What do you do as part of your role?

I am the curate at St Thomas' and St Mark's meaning that I'm training on the job! I was ordained as a clergy person in July and for the next 3+ years I'm learning how to lead a



church under the guidance of Gary. This means I'll be involved in all sorts of things alongside leading services and preaching too.

Are you a morning person or a night owl?

Neither?! I love to sleep morning and night! But, I'm probably slightly more of a night owl.

What is your favourite worship song and why?

Communion by Maverick City Music. It's such a beautiful intimate song about the closeness to God which we were designed for and is available to us all now.

What keeps you motivated in your role?

My faith! I really truly believe, and have experienced, that knowing God and being shaped in my life by him is the greatest freedom and joy I can know. I want to share that hope with others and believe that God wants to know you no matter who you are or what your life looks like.

If you could learn a new skill what would it be?

I've always wanted to learn how to fly a plane. I wanted to grow up to be a pilot when I was a child.

What are you most thankful for?

I'm incredibly thankful for the kindness and encouragement of people. Kind words make such a difference, whoever you are, and help us all keep going.

How would you spend your ideal day?

A lovely lie-in and slow morning, my favourite foods all day, shopping with friends or a good long walk with my husband Jack and our dog Rufus!

Do you like your cereal crunchy or mushy?

Crunchy, absolutely.

What song is guaranteed to always get your feet tapping?

Special by Lizzo!

If you could live in a book, film or tv series what would it be?

I'd love to live in The Great Gatsby - the 1920's glitz and glam would be so fun.

What is your favourite meal?

One that I made up! I call it prawn pasta - it's roasted tomatoes, garlic, basil, olive oil and chilli flakes with prawns and fresh pasta. It's so good I could eat it forever.

The St Thomas War Memorial Pam Brimelow

Each one of the men named on the Brampton War Memorial is testimony to the sacrifices made during the First World War. Each one of these names represents a person, someone's son, husband, father, brother, family member or friend.



The Brampton War Memorial is made in the form of a granite column surmounted by a cross. Cornish granite was chosen as this was thought to be preferable to Derbyshire stone as it would 'weather better'. The base and steps to the Memorial are constructed from the large stones which had formed the steps to St. Thomas' Church chancel, removed when the chancel was re-ordered in 1920. The Memorial was erected by the people of the Parish of St Thomas', Brampton at a cost of £900 and unveiled by the Duke of Devonshire on Sunday 18th September 1921. The Memorial was dedicated to the memory of two hundred and ten men of Brampton who lost their lives in the First World War.

Extract from St. Thomas' Parish Magazine, October 1921:

"It was a glorious September afternoon, and long before the time fixed for the service (3pm), an immense crowd had gathered in the Churchyard and in the roadway numbering some thousands. The space in the Churchyard to the east of the memorial was kept for the relatives of those whose names are on the Memorial. The 6th Battalion Sherwood Foresters assembled at the Drill Hall and marched via Chatsworth Road to the St. Thomas' Schools, where the Mayor's procession was formed in the following order:-

The Sherwood Foresters

Ex-Service men headed by the Band of the Old Comrades
The Borough Police in charge of Chief Constable Kilpatrick
The Mayor (Mr W. Hawksley Edmunds) preceded by the
mace-bearer and accompanied by his Chaplain,
the Rev. Canon Shaw, Vicar of Chesterfield.
The members of the Corporation

The procession was met at the Churchyard by His Grace the Duke of Devonshire, in the uniform of Lord Lieutenant of the County; the Rev. F. H. Burnside, Rector of St. Thomas', the Rev. H. T. Potten, Minister of the Congregational Church, Brampton; the Churchwardens, Mr. H. A. Sanders and Mr. R. Plowright; and members of St. Thomas' choir. Many military officers were also recorded as being present at the ceremony.

After making a speech to the assembled congregation, the Duke of Devonshire then said:

"I have now pleasure in formally unveiling this Memorial, and I hope it will serve, not only as an expression of gratitude to those who did so much, but as an example and inspiration to all that come after us."

..... He then withdrew the Union Jack which had been veiling the Memorial, and as it fell to the base of the column the buglers of the Sherwood Foresters sounded the Last Post.'

The Derbyshire Times, September 1921

"More than 2,000 men went from Brampton to serve in WW1 and over 200 lost their lives. The War Memorial in St. Thomas' Churchyard stands as a lasting tribute to those who made the great sacrifice and when it was unveiled on 18th September 1921, by the Duke of Devonshire, the crowd 'numbered some thousands'.

The ceremony was one of the most impressive and moving to be held in Brampton."

Extracts from St Thomas' Parish Magazines:

November 1919

'a public meeting was held in St Thomas' Schools to discuss what form the Parish Memorial should take.

Mr. A. D. Sharp was appointed Architect for the Brampton War Memorial –.

Mr. Sharp declared in favour of the site inside the south-east gate of the churchyard to the right of the path as you enter the gate.'

February 1920

'The General Committee of St Thomas' P.C.C. agreed unanimously in favour of a cross of Cornish granite (grey), rather than Derbyshire stone as it was felt it would stand the weather better.'

July 20th

'The total cost of the memorial was expected to be £900: only £500 was currently available.

As contributions towards the cost were slow at coming in it was decided to send out a circular letter throughout the Parish.

At a public meeting Mr. Thomas Scott and Mr. Joseph Haslam informed those present that they intend to provide a clock in the church tower, and this they did the following year, the clock being presented by Mr. Scott and erected at the cost of Mr. Haslam "as a thank-offering for the safe return of his two sons from the war". It was dedicated by the Rector during the evening service on October 24th 1920 and a commemorative brass plate was placed in the Baptistery (West Porch).'

The two men were Thomas and Joseph Haslam. Thomas was Winifred Slack's father. Thomas Scott was grandfather to the two men.

Brampton Parish Magazine, December 1941 The War Memorial Cross in St Thomas' Churchyard The Symbol of the 'Nailed Cross'

"At the top of the War Memorial Cross in St Thomas' Churchyard there is incised the symbol of the 'Nailed Cross'. There are two traditions as to the number of nails that were used to crucify our Blessed Lord, in one tradition three nails were used, and in the other four; in the latter it is held that a nail was driven through each hand and each foot. These four nails are represented in heraldry by the 'Nailed Cross' and it is used to signify victory through suffering. This is the symbol that is on our war memorial and appropriately so. The German Swastika, or 'gammalian'

as it is called owing to its form being that of four Greek capital letters, 'gamma' Γ , being placed together is an entirely different symbol from that of the 'Nailed Cross'. The 'gammalian' (Swastika) is of very ancient and heathen origin, although it has sometimes been used in upright form in Christian symbolism, but the 'Nailed Cross' is essentially a Christian symbol and Christian in origin.

I am constantly asked why the German Swastika is on our War Memorial!!! It is not!!! I have referred to this a number of times in the pulpit. I now hope the matter is at rest."

H.J. Sillitoe (Rector).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, established by Royal Charter in 1917 has responsibility for:

- Making and maintaining the graves of members of the forces of the Commonwealth countries who died in both W.W.1 and W.W.2
- Maintaining memorials to the dead who have no known grave
- Providing records and registers of these burials and commemorations

In total the Commission is responsible for 1.7 million graves and memorials at 23,000 locations in 153 countries around the world.

The C.W.G.C. grew out of the vision of one man, Sir Fabian Ware. Aged 45 in 1914, Ware was too old to see frontline combat, but still served as the commander of a mobile unit of the British Red Cross, tending the injured on the Western Front. Saddened by the colossal scale of the casualties he saw day after day, Ware felt driven to ensure that the final resting places of the fallen would be properly marked and never forgotten. Under his leadership the Red Cross unit began recording and caring for all the temporary graves they could find.

By 1915, Ware's work had been officially recognised by the War Office, and his unit was incorporated into the British Army as the

Graves Registration Commission

Next, Ware wanted the 'Imperial Spirit' that was so evident between 1914 and 1918, with troops coming from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, India and indeed every corner of the British Empire, to be reflected in the work of his new organisation. Ware submitted a memorandum to the Imperial War Conference. In May 1917, the Imperial War Graves Commission was established by Royal Charter, with Ware serving as Vice-Chairman and the Prince of Wales as President.

Once the Armistice had been signed and land for cemeteries and memorials had been guaranteed, the enormous task of recording the details of the dead began. By 1918, some 587,000 graves had been identified and a further 559,000 casualties were registered as having no known resting place.

Ware made sure the Commission set the highest standards for all its work in order to pay the greatest respect to the fallen. Three of the finest architects in Britain, Sir Edwin Lutyens, Sir Herbert Baker and Sir Reginald Blomfield, were appointed to oversee the design and construction of the cemeteries and memorials. Rudyard Kipling who lost his son John, at the Battle of Loos in 1915, was asked to write the inscriptions for the memorials and headstones.

The Imperial War Graves Commission became the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in 1960 and currently cares for cemeteries and memorials at 23,000 locations in 153 countries, playing a vital role in remembering the war dead.

The Commission's values and aims, laid out in 1917, are as relevant now as they were a century ago:

Each of the dead should be commemorated by name on the headstone or memorial: headstones and memorials should be permanent: headstones should be uniform, and there should be no distinction made on account of military or civil rank, race or creed.

A number of Brampton men who fell in W.W.1 are buried in Commonwealth War Graves in the Chesterfield area. Two are buried at

St. Thomas' they are Private Thomas Catherall and Private John Adlington. Others are buried at St. Peter's, Holymoorside, Spital and Boythorpe cemeteries. Some of these men died shortly after the war as a result of wounds/illnesses suffered while on active service. Some died in hospitals in this country after being repatriated with serious wounds.

Most of the Brampton casualties are buried in Commonwealth War Graves in France or Germany. Thirteen men, having no known grave are commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial (France) to those who fell on the Somme.

Daily Prayer for the Unknown The Graceful Chapter

Father Lord in heaven,
Thank you for another day.
I pray that you protect us from the unknown.
Help us be prepared for anything the devil throws at us.
Let us not willingly go to places that might destroy us.
Help us not fall into any attractive traps.
Keep us from making decisions that may handicap us.
Protect our bodies from the poisons we unknowingly consume.
Keep us safe from thieves and robbers who plot against us.
Remove diseases and sickness that lay in wait for us.
Protect us from ignorant mistakes we might be making.
Be our guidance in times of confusion and hold our hands when we walk through the darkness.

Saltergate Children's Home, Ethiopia Kevin Morley

Today Alemayoh is selling his honey, Kasu is on her market stall, Berhane is collecting the eggs and Fasika is making clothes for her customers - all on the road to independence. And that's a knockout dress Fasika made for you, Mariel.



At a few hours old a boy was abandoned on the hospital steps and we agreed to care for our first child. For 8 years we have supported Amanuel and his, now, 144 pals through war, famine and disease. Things can be done and ways can be found, no matter what.



No magic wands, no quick fixes - just a Sheffieldtrained orthopaedic surgeon who made the decision to spend his life helping children in desperate circumstances, instead of banking millions for himself by working in the USA. And, the determination of a

young girl who was told she would never walk. All the best to Dr Tim and Rahel.

We have cared for Caleb since we were asked to look after him last year - a starving baby. No more hunger pangs, no more poverty but a bright and lively little boy. Our Sukare is doing a brilliant job and Caleb has everything in the world to look forward to.

Seems like Efrata and Sharon are trying to start a smile pandemic - good for you girls! All the children are doing great and these two send their love today.



Photos Provided by Kevin Morley



at St Marks Church

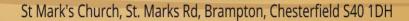
Games, conversation, music and friendship.

Sandwiches, cake, crisps, tea and coffee. No charge but donations welcome

2-4pm

Wednesday 17th January Wednesday 20th March





Thoughts at the PA desk Robin Dawson

When I stand at the PA desk at church I find that it is not a great place for spiritual discernment. The worship may be uplifting, the preaching riveting, the music elevating, the prayers meaningful, but I have to make sure that the words



on the screen come up at the right time, and that the volume on the mics is correct.

This to avoid the dreaded turned head and hard stare from a congregant. Harder than you would think, especially if you get carried away with a good bit of Wesley.

On 19 November I was stationed at my desk. On the news the previous evening was video of further action in Gaza. Pictures of people's homes being pulverised by a pitiless military machine. The military machine belonged to a nation that itself had been wounded by a foul assault that triggered memories going back generations.

The subject of the teaching in St Thomas that day was Home and Hope. There were Bible readings about the victory of Jesus over death, "Where O death is your sting", and about the New Jerusalem, "death will be no more: mourning and crying and pain will be no more". I thought "This is ludicrous!"

Here we are going on about hope, while a military machine is destroying the homes, the infrastructure and the lives of a whole population. And Gaza is not the only place where state and terrorist violence is crushing, crushing, crushing hope. Think Ukraine, think Sudan, think Myanmar.

We sang "All heaven declares the glory of the risen Lord" and people went forward for the simple sharing of bread and wine. And as

happens sometimes at St Thomas' at that place in the service there was a calm transparent peace around us. It is so easy to pray at this time for my brothers and sisters quietly lining up there. So, I was experiencing this peace while at the same time my mind was trying to process the contrast between this peace and the video of the crushed people in crushed buildings. Ludicrous?

Into my mind came the thought that there is not much I can do to influence the situation. There is prayer, of course, but at the moment prayer seems more a cry of pain than a tool to heal the world. And the thought came to me that perhaps I ought to be thanking God for the peace that I enjoy, and for the security that I feel knowing that God loves me amongst my brothers and sisters at St Thomas.

And another thought came to me that the best thing I can do now is to follow Christ where I am. Doing so in the hope that I will help to demonstrate that there are places where people are good and loving and live in relative peace with each other. All in the strength of Jesus Christ. Of course, I should carry on praying and contributing to the costs of relief efforts when they are eventually allowed. Could it be said that this is the sensible thing to do while we wait on God to work his purposes out and stops things being ludicrous?

Was this God speaking to me at the PA desk?

Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Appeal Update Cassie Wainwright

A huge thank you to everyone who donated a shoebox to the Shoebox Appeal, Operation Christmas Child.



An incredible 270 boxes were collected at the end of November and are now on their way around the world.



Momen S Evening

MONDAY 26 FEB • 7:30PM BOOKING OPENS IN JAN

Nativities at St Thomas Cassie Wainwright

This advent has been a full of two incredible nativity related events.

The first was the Nativity Festival, running for four days, where multiple nativities were displayed around the church and families were invited to go around all of the nativities, learning and exploring multiple characters from the nativity story.

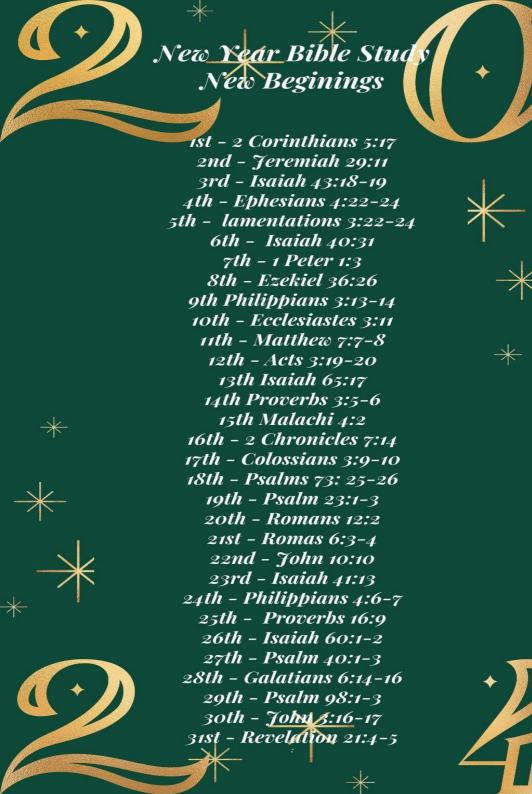
Guided by an interactive booklet and with spaces to read stories, dress

up and express artistically, the nativity was a very special event for everyone who visited.

The second nativity event was the nativity service on Christmas eve. Following the story of King Herod's Secret Policeman and packed with modern versions of popular carols, it was a spectacular success.









It can also be read online at stthomasbrampton.com

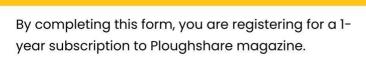
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2024



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