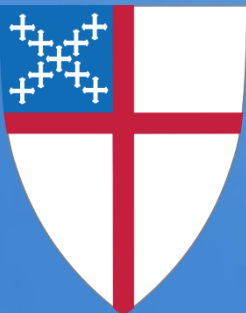


Winter 2022

# IKON

The Ascension Messenger



Church  
of the  
Ascension  
Munich

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# Points to Note

## Worship

We worship every Sunday at midday in the Emmauskirche, Laurinplatz, 81545 München, Germany. For up-to-date news and details of services, check our website at: [www.ascension-munich.org](http://www.ascension-munich.org)

Do also take a look at our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/ascensionmunich](http://www.facebook.com/ascensionmunich) and our YouTube channel: [www.youtube.com/channel/UC4802rHFcPLNCJxnSGeZ3FA](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4802rHFcPLNCJxnSGeZ3FA)

## Clergy

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The Rev. Dr. Ali Gray, Priest Associate  
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## Pastoral Care

In a pastoral emergency, contact **Fr. Dan** on his mobile: 0151 5330 8266  
or **Joan Case**: home: 08024 49945 mobile: 0172 825 6425

You can also contact the wardens:

**Janet Day-Strehlow**: mobile: 0170 792 6767  
**George Battrick**: home: 089 688 1151 mobile: 0152 082 93438

## Financial Support

Our church receives no funds from any government body; we are entirely supported by the contributions of our members.

Donations and pledges can be made by bank transfer to:  
The Church of the Ascension, Deutsche Bank  
IBAN: DE49 7007 0024 0459 8702 00

2 Corinthians 9:7 *“Let each one do just as he has resolved in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”*

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# Editorial

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ

Welcome to the winter edition of our magazine, but let's face it, when you read this, Christmas will be upon us, so choosing an icon of the Archangel Gabriel to grace the cover was not a hard choice, angels are busy at Christmas.

It is with pleasure that I announce that Amanda Höschler has joined the editorial team, or should I say re-joined as she has worked on the **ikon** before. She brings lots of new ideas and energy that the editor sorely lacks, so welcome Amanda. Mitchell remains on the team and will be more active now that we have a Choir Director.

I am taking a risk in this edition. Two items, the Incarnation and the Journey of the Magi, paint, for me, a very realistic picture of what happened at Jesus's birth. If you find them disturbing, I apologise, but for me they show very clearly that this was the birth of the Son of God as well as of Mary's baby.

The Christmas theme continues with the Quiz and a description of the not-to-be-missed exhibition of Nativity Scenes at the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum.

There are reports on the Convocation Convention and on the lively and successful Harvest Thanksgiving.

We have the usual items such as the Ascension Recipe, on my Desert Island and Behind the Scenes that this time deals with coffee hour. There is no interview this month, but it will return. Page 14 does not do justice to all the activities that go on in support of the Tafel and the Soup Kitchen. A very big thank you to everyone involved.

Do read the page of Congratulations carefully as there are two very important items on that page. The page devoted to news of the Emmauskirche should be read in the name of good neighbourliness and be sure to look at Page 33, as there is an article there that may cheer those who don't like traditional Lenten disciplines.

I leave you with Fr. Dan's assurance that there is no need to fear as we move through Advent and await the second coming of Christ. God loves you unconditionally.

Have a blessed Christmas.

*Sue*



## Letter from Fr. Dan

Dear Church of the Ascension Family

In 1940 the great silent film actor Charlie Chaplin released his first film with sound, *The Great Dictator*. The film is a work of satirical genius and was Chaplin's most commercially successful film, as well as his most highly revered (it was nominated for five Oscars). The film is a satire, a black-comedy, and it is not subtle in its condemnation of Fascism, Hitler and Mussolini. I won't go into the plot here, but no one can watch it these days without knowing that it is calling out Fascism, Nazism and antisemitism. Any person who sees the film, whether in 1940 or now, would clearly acknowledge the symbols, clearly recognize what the film was parodying and clearly get the point.

Right now we are in the middle of Advent, a season that celebrates and anticipates the arrival of Christ. All the markets and decorations signal the celebratory arrival of Christ at Christmas, but Advent has two focal points. Besides Christmas, we also await the second coming of Christ. The time when we anticipate Christ to return as judge of the world, a time where evil will cease and only goodness will remain. During this time of year we often hear readings about the end time and about prophecies of judgment. During several times of the church year, these themes come up and they always engender questions.

Recently, while visiting the Alte Pinakothek Museum, I was struck by how many of the paintings took the last judgment as their theme. I started counting and in just four rooms I saw twenty-two paintings on this theme ... this subject is something that fascinates us.

After talking with one of our members, who admitted to having a hard time with this theme, I decided to write just a little bit about it. First, let's talk just a second about the Book of Revelation. This is a masterful and awe-inspiring book, but one that is highly figurative and symbolic ... a book that defies easy reading and trite characterization. Knowing this let me say, with trepidation, just a few words. This book was written by John the Revelator on the Isle of Patmos and is normally dated to the year 95 CE during the reign of the Roman Emperor Domitian. It was addressed to the churches of Asia Minor, but principally to the church in Ephesus ... from where John was banished.

Now, just like we recognize the symbols and images in *The Great Dictator*, just like we can see them and hear them and recognize to whom they refer ... the early Christians in Asia Minor recognized the flurry of symbols and images in the Book of Revelation. While there are many interpretations, I find this one most plausible: The book is a polemic, a

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satire, a political and religious take down of the Emperor Domitian. You see, Ephesus was his religious headquarters, he established a worship center there ... and it was designed to promote emperor worship ... his own cult.

What John did was take imagery, imagery that everyone in Ephesus would recognize, and use it against Domitian's claims for divinity. Almost every symbol found in the Book of Revelation has a direct counterpart in the Emperor cult. The book was meant to show that the Emperor was not all powerful, not God of the universe, that his way and his might would sometime end, but that God's would not ... God's rule will last forever.

The problem is that over time the symbolic nature of this book became obscured. People were reading the book in cultures far removed from Ephesus. What was clear to the first addressees of the book was no longer clear. So people developed images and theologies and doctrines about the End of World. People took imagery from the Book of Revelation, which was meant to address Domitian and his cult, and universalized it ... made it mean something that it was never meant to mean. It's on these stories and images that the popular imagination feeds ... the paintings in

the museum don't address the corrupt imperial way of life and worship ... they take over symbols and turn them into something frighteningly personal. Make no mistake, there is judgment in the Book of Revelation, but it is judgement of a corrupt and violent and oppressive religious and political system ... not judgement for all of us at the end of times.

Now, this is complicated and it merits a lot more writing and conversation (maybe I'll organize a class on this soon) but what I want you to know right now is that you don't need to fear. All of those harsh images and teachings of last judgement, they miss the mark. Remember that we serve a merciful God, a God of compassion and forgiveness, a God who is love. Don't spend an undue amount of time worrying about this ... God loves you.

The simple point of the book (if there is one) is probably this: Love will last, love will endure, goodness is forever ... everything else will fade away. God loves you unconditionally.

I look forward to seeing you in Church and talking about this more.

Much peace,

Dan



## Convocation Convention

The Annual Convention of Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe was held this year in Clermont-Ferrand, France.

People often wonder what happens at the annual convention. This article provides a glimpse into this year's event, which was split into an online preliminary segment to discuss administrative and budget matters as well as resolutions and a combined physical and hybrid portion that took place in Clermont-Ferrand.

The Church of the Ascension had two delegates, George Battrick and Lloyd Denton, and one alternate, Jes Villa, who attended as Chair of the Commission on the Ministry of the Baptised. The Rev. Dan Morrow and the Rev. Dr. Ali Gray were present as clergy. David Case and Lois Stuckenbruck were there as members of the Council of Advice, as was Janet Day-Strehlow, Chair of the European Institute of Christian Studies. In addition, Joachim Zeller attended the online sessions of the Festival of Gathering that focused on the theme of refugees.

On October 15 the Convention formally opened online with a discussion of procedural matters, including resolutions. Elections to vacancies in Convocation bodies were also held. Among these, Fr. Dan was elected to the Council of Advice, Jes Villa as lay member of the Disciplinary Board, and David Case and Janet Day-Strehlow as Deputies to the General Convention of the Episcopal Church in 2024.

The business section of the convention opened in Clermont-Ferrand on October 27 with the keynote address of Rev. Dr. Lorenzo Lebrija, Virginia Theological Seminary, entitled "How to Try", in which he argued that priests must learn to innovate in order to attract new congregants and retain existing ones. This was followed by the Bishop's Address, then the opening Eucharist.

That evening was the occasion for the Bishop's Banquet, where several individuals were acclaimed for their contributions to the Convocation. In recognition of his achievements, a new award was established in the name of David Case, who has stepped down from the Council of Advice. This award is to honour young people who demonstrate high attainment in the future.

On Friday October 28 the Financial Report for 2021 and the Budget for 2023 were formally presented and subsequently approved. Following the report of the Council of Advice, the convention recessed.

The convention resumed on November 5 to consider resolutions. The invitation to the 2023 Annual Convention in Wiesbaden was issued. Then the 2022 Convention was adjourned.

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Part of this year's Convocation Convention was the "Festival of Gathering - Welcoming and Walking with Refugees" with the objective of helping Episcopal and Anglican churches respond to the presence and needs of refugees within their local communities. It was made possible through the generous support of Episcopal Relief & Development (ERD).

Several presentations and workshops were offered to cover different aspects of the topic.

The keynote address "Faith in Solidarity with Refugees" by Safak Parvey (who had previously worked for the UNHCR) acknowledged the important role of religious communities as advocates for refugees and, through their grass-roots level work with refugees, as an "early warning system" for emerging crises on a local level.

A talk titled "Welcoming God in the Face of Stranger" by Orthodox theologian Andrej Jeftic introduced to the theological aspects of welcoming strangers. Starting from the story of Abraham being visited by God in the form of three strangers and offering hospitality to them (Gen 18), the speaker argued that it is God that we encounter in the face of strangers and refugees, and highlighted key aspects of the hospitality we are called to offer in response, such as it being unconditional, selfless and generous.

"Walking with the Traumatized" was an excellent workshop presented by "our" Rev. Dr. Ali Gray, in which she described the trauma and harsh conditions afflicting trafficked persons in the United Kingdom.

"But the Government Does That! The View of the Church from a Civil Servant" by Stefan Frank, who works in the Ausländeramt in Wiesbaden, showed the limits of a government authority in addressing holistically the needs of refugees and pointed to the unique role church communities can play in their response to the emotional as well as practical needs of refugees that are outside an authority's perimeter.

In "Developing and Implementing a Grant to Support Ministry with Refugees", Episcopal Relief & Development (ERD) provided practical information about the programme of one-year grants up to 10,000 US\$ offered by the Convocation to fund outreach activities for refugees, e.g. eligibility, application procedure. This is relevant to CoA, since we can apply for such a grant to support Ukrainian refugees.

*Jes Villa and Joachim Zeller*



## Racial Justice Book Group

On October 29<sup>th</sup> the Racial Justice Book Group discussed ***Jesus and the Disinherited*** by Howard Thurman. We started our discussion by talking about the complexity of the book and our initial difficulty in absorbing the richness of Thurman's thoughts, and then continued with sharing the wonder of how he managed to fill the book with gold nuggets of understanding – many worthy to be worn on a T-shirt – and the timelessness of a book first published in 1949.

This slender, 112-page volume is divided into five chapters: Jesus, An Interpretation; Fear; Deception; Hate; and Love. The first chapter deals with the Christian churches' failure to focus on the challenges of the "disinherited", those living oppressed lives. The following chapters deal with the realities that are met by the "disinherited".

Jesus taught us to love one another, be charitable and have faith and hope.

- Fear is what the disinherited know because of the threat of violence they live with every day simply because they are different from the stronger oppressor. This fear is passed from one generation to another (we were reminded of Ta-Nehisi Coates' ***Between the World and Me***).
- Deception is how the weak have learned to deceive the stronger by doing everything they can to avoid being noticed, to avoid standing out as different. This deception eats away at the soul. Thurman uses as an example "the morally degrading aspects of deception and dishonesty that enter into the relationship between men and women". A wife might risk losing her voice by trying to keep the peace rather than confront battles.
- Hate comes about when "there is contact without fellowship". The strong hate and oppress the weak, and the weak therefore hate the strong. This hate destroys both parties.
- Jesus teaches Love, which requires us to recognize ourselves and our mutual humanity in the other.

This review of our meeting does not do this volume justice. Reading this book surprised us how relevant it is in the world we know today. It gave us an awareness that we need to reach out to the other, and left us with the question, "How do we reach out?". Anyone have any suggestions?

Please join us on January 21<sup>st</sup> at 10.00 when we will be discussing ***The Promise*** by Damon Galgut.

*Deirdre Tincker*

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# A Letter from Starrla Lares

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ at the Ascension

My Christian journey began at the Church of the Ascension in Munich. In 2017 I had moved to Munich for work and what I had hoped would be a new life in Germany. Not being a Christian at the time and having been hurt by the church in my youth, I hadn't walked through the doors of a church in 20 years.

My friend from work and a member of Ascension invited me to come to the church, and Ascension welcomed me with open arms and an open heart. There was a kindness and a spirit to this beautiful parish that I hadn't experienced in my youth, and I felt as if I was at home.

After joining in worship for several months, my job contract ended in Munich and it was time for me to return to the US. I returned to the US with the memories of Ascension fresh in my heart and mind, and decided to start to attend church in Texas. The seed of Christ had been planted in my heart at Ascension, and it was there in Texas that that seed bore fruit, when I was finally baptized.

It was shortly after my baptism that God called me to ministry as a priest in his church, and the next year was spent in deep discernment and prayer as God drew me closer and closer to him. After a year in Texas, I had found work again back in Munich and returned to Ascension and was welcomed back, but this time as a Christian. Soon after arriving I was confirmed by Bishop Mark and with all of the fire in my heart to serve, and a love for God and His Church, I asked Father Allan to put me to work right away! He did, and I was able to serve in many ways at the church that I had fallen in love with.

Although my plan was to stay in Munich much longer this time, and discern my calling in Europe, it seems that God had other plans. My mother had gotten a very aggressive form of breast cancer and with the guidance of Mother Ali and Father Allan I returned home to Texas to be by her side. Through the struggles of Covid and my mother's diagnosis, God never left my side and my calling never weakened. The Lord was like a fire burning in my heart, and after three years of personal discernment, I finally entered the official discernment process for Holy Orders in the Diocese of Dallas. It's with great joy and humility that I can now say that I've been approved for postulancy and will be headed off to Nashotah House seminary in the Fall to begin my theological education.

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# Ikon

The Church of the Ascension will always hold a special place in my heart. The home in which my Christian journey began, and a place where I could discover Christ surrounded by the love and support of the members of this very special congregation. Thank you all for everything that you've done for me, I am where I am on my journey today, because of you.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

*Starrla Lares*



Starrla with Bishop Mark Edington at her Confirmation

# Harvest Thanksgiving

It was a shame if you missed the wonderful rather different Harvest Thanksgiving service on November 13<sup>th</sup> at the Church of the Ascension. Hymns, readings, sermon, Nicene Creed, prayers of the people, confession, absolution - all were familiar. Then came the African-style offertory with music and dancing that Donald Adawele introduced with a homily and that was definitely out of the comfort zone for traditional Episcopalians.

Helped by Chairman Sydneys, Donald was the moving force behind organising the musicians – Michael Tengue on drums and an excellent gospel singer – to accompany this part of the service.

It was very uplifting to see our African parishioners and visitors leading the procession, taking money and produce to the altar, singing joyous songs of praise and wearing truly spectacular robes in vibrant colours.



Other members of the congregation from the USA, the Philippines, France, Germany and even some stiff-upper-lipped Brits joined the procession. We couldn't compete with the enthusiasm, but we did try!

The enthusiasm for this event and the generous offerings of baked goods, jams and fruit and vegetables was amazing. The potluck afterwards, organised by Tonda Kemmerling, was a tribute to the culinary diversity of our community and the guests who celebrated with us. Food from the USA, the Philippines, Nigeria, Great Britain, was only a small sample of what was available.

During the potluck Donald slipped into another role as auctioneer. Enthusiastically swinging his (imaginary) gavel he auctioned off baked goods, preserves, baskets of fruit and vegetables and African garments. Together with the purchases made directly from the home-made goodies table a grand total of €300.00 was raised for the church.

As well as thanks to Donald and Tonda, the musicians and all the bakers, jam and chutney makers and the providers of baskets of fruit and vegetables they are also

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# Ikon

due to the Coffee Hour team for serving hot and cold beverages. Also to Angela Schneider and Maria Ramadori for the lovely table decorations and to all the willing hands that set-up tables, plated food, folded serviettes and helped with clearing up afterwards; especially Patrick Kana's efforts in the clean-up were indispensable.

This African-themed event will not be the last.

*The Event was organized by the Thanksgiving Committee and three people compiled this report.*



# Outreach

Many thanks to all who kindly contributed to the basket for the Münchner Tafel. All items were handed out during our visit on 10 December and were gratefully received by all those who came.

*Outreach Committee*



# Soup Kitchen

One of the helpers, Alia, perfectly summed the emotion: “When I saw how happy the people were in receiving a small gift, it made ME feel so happy!”.

*SKEvents*



## The Incarnation

As told by Martha, the innkeeper's wife who helped Mary with the birth.

Permission to publish granted on condition that the entire chapter not be published.  
The symbol \*\*\* marks where a paragraph or some sentences have been omitted.

It's good to rest at last. It's been quite a night. If I had the energy I would get up and stoke the fire for some warmth, but all I can do is sit here and think about what's happened.

\*\*\*

Yes, last night. In the middle of the evening, about eight it was, with the inn at its busiest, everyone laughing and halfway lashed, a couple come to the door. He, older and serious and earnest-looking and she, young and frightened and heavy with child. I mean *very* heavy with child. I mean about to drop her load at any moment. I smiled. Because I know that feeling. I've had seven children myself and the first is always fearful, and she such a slip of a girl, it was obvious to me that it was her first time. I didn't think the man was her husband – her father more like! But he was determined, and wouldn't take no for an answer. And there was no room in the inn. I told him plain: There's no room, couldn't he see; the place was chock-a-block. Was he having a laugh, asking for a room at this time of the evening and with this many people in town?

But he stood his ground. I like that in a man. So I folded my arms and smiled at him and stood my ground too. I told him there was no room. And he gestured towards the girl and told me what I already knew; and I told him that didn't change nothing, but if he insisted then they could go out the back. There was an outhouse, not much more than a cowshed, where the animals sheltered at night. It was warm and it was out of the wind. I would bring water and blankets for a small price. And wine and bread as well if he was able to pay. Take it or leave it.

He looked at me for a long while. He was turning it over in his head. He was desperate, but what I liked about him was he didn't show desperate. There was a dignity to him. He turned to her, the girl, Mary her name was, and explained the situation. She too had a crackle of fire in her eyes. She was tough. I like that. But she was also desperate. How could she not be? Anything is better than nothing is what her face seemed to say, and neither of them had the time or the luxury to choose. They needed help.

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My heart softened a bit then. I know I'm a hard woman. I'm prone to snap and ask questions afterwards. You have to be that way in this business. Who am I kidding? You have to be that way in this world.

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"We'll take it," he said.

I wiped my hands on the towel that was tied round my waist and gestured to the girl. "Come here, my pretty," I said "I've been this way before. When the time comes, nature takes over. You'll know what to do and I'll come and check on you if I can. Come this way."

I led them round the back of the inn. The barn where our animals sheltered was no more than a rough covering of brush and hay propped against the overhang of the wall and shadowed on two sides by the large cypress trees that grew in the yard.

The animals were restless. They were not usually disturbed at this time of the evening. And it stank. There wasn't time to clean it out each day, and if we did bring in fresh straw it was in the morning. I felt another rush of pity for the girl then, and called to one of the servants to bring a bale of clean straw from inside. I pushed open the makeshift door of the shelter. I clapped my hands to get the animals – a cow, a couple of goats and a few scrawny chickens – to move out of the way. I made a corner of the stable as comfortable as I could, and when the fresh straw arrived made a seat for the girl and put the remainder of the straw into one of the feeding troughs. "You can lay the child here when you need to sleep yourself," I said.

Then her waters broke. It just happened, and she stood there looking frightened and amazed. Her skirts were sodden, and she looked at me pleadingly, completely unprepared for what was about to happen next. Had her mother taught her nothing? She let out a whimper. The animals could sense something unfolding. They started banging their hooves against the ground and whinnying. Her husband looked away. He was useless. Men usually are. He just stood there staring hopefully at me. "Come here," I said to the girl. I held her then and felt the quick fluttering rhythm of her heart. She was scared. But also trusting.

"I've had seven children," I told her. "I'll help you with this one."

And so I did. Through the long hours of her labour: through the choppy waters of strong and mounting contractions; through the calm waters of boredom and wondering if it will happen at all.



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# Ikon

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After a few hours my husband came out. “What petty sight is this?” he muttered angrily. “There are customers to be looked after and dishes to wash, you know.” Then he stomped back inside.

Her husband – Joseph, I gathered his name was – paced. He was what you might call a traditional father. He didn’t actually do anything. He just kept muttering – or was he praying? – that all this was from God and was safe with God. “Well, you’re safe with me,” I told him. “Now hold this cloth and wipe her face when I tell you.”

In the darkest hour of the night, I suppose about two or three o’clock, the baby’s head appeared. He stared, blinking and gawping at the world for what seemed an age. And she was crying out with the pain of it, and the great longing for the baby to be free. It was one of those strange halfway moments between the womb and the world, between what was and what is. Then with the next contraction, on a spasm of pain and joy, he was born.

\*\*\* I didn’t need to spank him or pat his little back. The breath seemed to rush into him, and he filled his lungs and let out a loud, piercing cry. I laughed at him. “Loud enough to wake the dead,” I said to his mother, “or at least my sleeping tenants. He’s a strong little fella.”

I laid him on his mother’s breast. That was a beautiful moment. It always is. Tender. As old as the world itself. As new as the dawn. And she moved his little face to her breast and he suckled there, and she held him and stroked his head.

\*\*\*

He was born, this baby. He was OK. He was well. And his mother too, she seemed fine. And even the husband was smiling now: relief as well as joy etched into his tired face. What a place for a baby to be born. What a couple.

Then she turned to me, the mother. “His name is Jesus,” she said, and smiled at me.

Well, I thought that was the end of it and I could get to bed myself. As the girl slept, and as the child slept too, the husband picked him up and laid him in the clean straw in the manger that I had prepared. I told him that he should get some sleep as well. But I knew he wouldn’t. His part had come and he was happy to watch and wait. So now I’m back here watching and waiting myself. You see, I can’t sleep. This birth and this odd couple have touched my heart. The inn is quiet. Everyone else asleep. But I’m sitting here awake.

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The fire has nearly gone out. There are a few embers just struggling to stay alight, fluttering and flashing but with nothing to feed on. If I get a few sticks and gently breath upon them the fire will return. But not for ever.

I don't know where these thoughts have come from. This fire burning low. A new fire kindled. Warmth, security, heat and light. I need them so much, and yet as I turn over the dying embers of my life – because that's how it seems to me, that's what I'm thinking about, all the beautiful things that are lost to me, all the hopes and dreams that have died in me – in the end it will all go cold and expire. Where is the fire and where is the light that will burn for ever, radiant and unconsuming?

Now there is a commotion outside. A lot of noise. Probably some drunks. I open the door a fraction. It looks like the shepherds from the fields above Bethlehem. They are little more than vagrants. What mischief have they been up to? And have they been in there? Disturbing the baby? And what is it they are they shouting about? A king born in Bethlehem? Peace to the world?

Then they are gone. Silence again. The emptiness of the night; and on the horizon the unhurried beginning of a new day as the approaching sunlight leaches slowly into the darkness.

What is going on? What has happened here this night? Who is this child that has visited me? Whose coming into the world have I shared? There is a strange and ominous foreboding upon me. Also a spark of pure, uncompromised joy. Who isn't moved to wonder at the sight of a newborn child?

I turn back into the room. The fire is suddenly roaring. I watch the flames dance in the hearth. What has been kindled here?

Taken from *Walking Backwards to Christmas* written by The Right Reverend Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York, published in 2014 by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.



Parts of the chapter re-printed by kind permission of the publisher.

## The Journey of the Magi by T S Eliot

A cold coming we had of it,  
Just the worst time of the year  
For a journey, and such a long journey:  
The ways deep and the weather sharp,  
The very dead of winter.”  
And the camels galled, sore-footed, refractory,  
Lying down in the melting snow.  
There were times we regretted  
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,  
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.  
Then the camel men cursing and grumbling  
And running away, and wanting their liquor and women,  
And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shelters,  
And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly  
And the villages dirty and charging high prices:  
A hard time we had of it.  
At the end we preferred to travel all night,  
Sleeping in snatches,  
With the voices singing in our ears, saying  
That this was all folly.

Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley,  
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation;  
With a running stream and a water-mill beating the darkness,  
And three trees on the low sky,  
And an old white horse galloped away in the meadow.  
Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the lintel,  
Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,  
And feet kicking the empty wine-skins.  
But there was no information, and so we continued  
And arriving at evening, not a moment too soon  
Finding the place; it was (you may say) satisfactory.

All this was a long time ago, I remember,  
And I would do it again, but set down  
This set down  
This: were we led all that way for  
Birth or Death? There was a birth, certainly,  
We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,  
But had thought they were different; this Birth was  
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.  
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,  
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,  
With an alien people clutching their gods.  
I should be glad of another death.

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# The Sanctuary Course

## **An introduction by the Revd. Dr Ali Gray**

As many of you know I trained as a psychiatrist and am a fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, the professional body for psychiatrists in the UK. I have long been passionate about equipping the church to support those, inside the church and out, living with mental illness. When I stepped down from the Chair of the RCPsych Spirituality and Psychiatry special interest group I felt I finally had the capacity to write a mental health and Christianity training package.

I considered what I thought would be needed for such a course and began to research what was available. When I found the Sanctuary Course, I realised I didn't need to reinvent the wheel. The course dovetails perfectly with my approach to mental health and illness, developed over thirty years in the NHS, and twelve years of ordained ministry, with the emphasis on narratives, lived experience and everyone being on a mental health continuum.

The course consists of eight weekly sessions, lasting two hours with a break. You don't have to do any homework. Each week we watch a video with an expert by experience telling their story and experts by training commenting on these. We then discuss the video and share together from our lives. The course is particularly helpful for those in leadership, and for those caring for and supporting people with long term mental health problems.

Those who have experience of mental illness are most welcome, but it is not a therapy group and is not suitable for those who are currently in crisis. I have now run the Sanctuary course twice with people from Church of the Ascension and further afield in the Convocation, with very positive feedback.

We will be running the Sanctuary course again over eight Thursday evenings. The course starts on January 19<sup>th</sup> and finishes on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023. We will not meet on 16<sup>th</sup> February or 19<sup>th</sup> March. We meet online 19.30 to 21.30. There is no charge.

More info at <https://sanctuarymentalhealth.org/sanctuary-course/>

To book please E-Mail [revdraligray@ascension-munich.com](mailto:revdraligray@ascension-munich.com) before 5<sup>th</sup> January.

*Ali Gray*

## A Christmas Quiz

1. To which king does Isaiah say: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel"?
2. Which of the four gospels makes no reference to Jesus's birth or incarnation?
3. The Archangel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would conceive and bear a son. What does the Hebrew name Gabriel mean?
4. There is no indication in any of the gospels that Jesus was born at night as depicted in so many carols and paintings. Where does this idea come from?
5. In which novel is it always winter and never Christmas?
6. Which Christmas song was broadcast from space in 1965?
7. A hundred years ago the National Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony was held for the first time. Which US president presided over this ceremony?
8. In what year was the Christmas Speech of late Queen Elizabeth II first televised?
9. In which ocean is Christmas Island?
10. Where did the Bishop we know as St Nicholas carry out his ministry?
11. What was the original title of the song The Little Drummer Boy?
12. To what country is the poinsettia native?
13. Which mathematician, physicist and astronomer was born on Christmas Day in 1642?
14. In contrast to the custom in the US and the UK, when do German people traditionally put up and decorate their Christmas trees?
15. Who first came up with the idea of the Christkind figure?

*Amanda Höschler*

Answers on Page 29

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# Exhibition of Nativity Scenes

An absolute highlight of the Advent and Christmas period in Munich is a visit to the "Krippenausstellung" (Exhibition of Nativity Scenes) in the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Prinzregentenstr. 3.

The largest of its kind in the world, the exhibition contains nativity scenes spanning three centuries, from the simply-made earlier exhibits to the magnificently carved and painted Neapolitan street scenes. The bulk of the collection was donated by one man, Max Schmederer (1854-1917).

Opening times: December and January only. Tuesday to Sunday 10-5pm, Thursdays 10-8pm. Closed Mondays and public holidays.

Entry costs 7 Euros / 6 Euros and 1 Euro on Sundays. Children under 18 free.

Please note that the exhibition is in the basement of the museum and may not be accessible for people with mobility problems.

Why not join Father Dan and others on a pilgrimage to the Bethlehem of Jesus's time on December 22<sup>nd</sup> at 18.00. Please contact Father Dan to sign up for the outing. This would also enable him to inform you of any changes to the scheduling. You are also invited to join Father Dan after the museum visit at a Christmas market.

**IMPORTANT:** If you are visiting at any other time, the museum advises ringing first (089-21 12 401) to confirm that the exhibition is open, as occasionally unexpected staff shortages necessitate closure.

Father Dan's email: [revdanmorrow@ascension-munich.com](mailto:revdanmorrow@ascension-munich.com)

Father Dan's phone number:  
015 15 33 08 266

*Amanda Höschler*



## Ascension Recipes: Salmon Rilletts

### Ingredients (for four generous helpings)

#### For the Broth:

One carrot cut in slices, one chopped onion, a bunch of parsley, thyme, one laurel leaf and a crushed clove of garlic. A lot of salt and pepper.



#### For the Rillettes themselves:

- 300g fresh salmon filet (you can buy it frozen from the supermarket and unfreeze it by carefully using your microwave at 150W)
- 100g smoked salmon cut in very small pieces
- 105g soft butter (just cut the butter in small pieces and leave it at room temperature for at least half an hour)
- Two tablespoons of olive oil
- Two beaten eggs
- The juice of a bit less than half a lemon.

### Method

- 1) First make the broth in which the fresh salmon will be cooked. Put all the ingredients for the broth in some boiling water and leave it boiling for 25 minutes. (Please note: You should use a lot of pepper and more importantly still, a lot of salt. The broth should taste unpleasantly salty. If it doesn't, the rillettes will be bland.)
- 2) When the broth is ready, remove all the bits and pieces of vegetable and only keep the fluid (using a sieve is the most convenient way of doing it).
- 3) Let the fresh salmon simmer in the broth for 20 minutes (on low heat).
- 4) Remove the salmon from the broth and leave it to cool for a few minutes. With a fork, thin it out all the while being careful to remove any remaining fish bone (salmon filet is usually boneless, but sometimes you may have an unpleasant surprise).
- 5) In a large bowl, mix the fresh and smoked salmon together with a fork.
- 6) Add the butter, the olive oil, the eggs and the lemon juice. Mix everything with a fork until the mixture is a smooth, even, paste.
- 7) Put in a pot or jar, cover and keep in the fridge for at least 8 hours before eating.

You can eat Salmon Rillettes as a spread on slices of white bread together with some green salad. It is a great starter for any festive meal.

*I offer this recipe in memory of my aunt, Lucienne Moreau, who died in January 2021 at the age of 99. She was a fabulous cook and I learnt this recipe from her. She used to make Salmon Rillettes for festive occasions, very often at Christmas.*

*Rémy Bethmont*

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# On my Desert Island

Our castaway this month is Malcolm Phillips, best known for his quizmaster skills. He has always loved music, any music, other than jazz. He started learning the piano at age seven, but somehow never managed to complete piano studies, and today he's a frustrated pianist, still stumbling over the keys. At least he can entertain himself privately, and has always been able to play by ear.

He takes up the story. When my son told me about Spotify, a digital music service that gives you access to millions of songs, I made a list of all my favourite pop songs. I listed forty numbers. I was a teenager in the Sixties, and I calculated that the average date of all my favourites was 1964! Choosing six pieces of music is a tough one.

1. **I just called to say I love you** Stevie Wonder's 1984 rendition. This particular song always reminds me of taking the ferry over to Sweden, when I was working there in the late 80's. It was always the first number played by the band in the bar, as the ship headed out into the North Sea. Still today, when I hear the song, I can feel the ship swaying.

Three masterpieces cannot be ignored as they always lift my spirits.

2. **Heroic Polonaise** (Op. 53 in A Flat Major) by F.Chopin. I have attempted to play it, with varying results!
3. **The Marriage of Figaro** by W.A.Mozart.
4. **Swan Lake** by P.I.Tchaikowsky
5. **I'm a Believer** by The Monkees, 1967. I understand that The Monkees were 'artificially' created as an American response to the Beatles (even though one of them was British!) This number was, I think, their absolute best. Whenever I hear it, I want to get up and dance!
6. **Sentimental Journey** by Ringo Starr, 1970. I have the video of Ringo Starr singing this in a night club in, I think, New York, in 1970. The choreography of the accompanying dancers is positively superb. I never get tired of watching it.

My luxury would be a piano, as long as I don't have to carry it!

*Malcolm Phillips*





## Behind the Scenes: Coffee Hour

As you sip your coffee or tea - not ONLY Brits like this, the milk having been poured into the cup first of course - spare a thought for those serving you. It is not a physically difficult job, but it is time-consuming and like everything else it has to be organised. Penny and Wendy explain.

John Hamilton stepped down a while ago so Joan Case is in charge of the duty rota, the organisation, making sure there are sufficient supplies, - basically everything! In theory there are ten people on the team, two for each Sunday, including fifth Sunday, which of course doesn't apply to every month. However, we are not yet into a routine after the break because of the pandemic and there might not be two for each Sunday in which case Joan steps in.

We try to get to church about 15-20 minutes before the service starts to make sure that everything is under control before going into church.

Fortunately, the coffee urn has usually already been prepared, so that the choir can have a well-earned cuppa after their practice and before the service. On the rare occasions that the urn hasn't been prepared, we fill it with the required amount of water and coffee (8 cups of ground coffee with water up to the 75 cups mark!) and switch it on before going into church, so that it's ready in time to serve the thirsty congregation.

Two together in a kitchen can be a recipe for disaster but we are both flexible and the tasks usually all just fall into place smoothly. Of course, if there is something special going on it can get quite hectic, but there's always a good atmosphere, and often if people see that we're very busy, they come and ask if we need any help, which is much appreciated.

Scones, fairy cakes, biscuits, shortbread, various finger food – the team doesn't have a favourite – they like everything.\* So some time might be spent at home baking, but this is not expected of us every time we serve. Don't let this put you off volunteering!

The time we leave is somewhat dependent on the length of the service, the number of people attending coffee hour and whether there is anything special going on. We're very lucky to have Patrick who loads the dishwasher and does the final clear-up, so that we can focus on collecting the few cups, saucers, that haven't been brought back to us and then making sure that the serving area is

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clean and tidy. Of course, if Patrick isn't there for any reason, we need to allow another half hour at least to clear up fully, so many thanks to Patrick.

People are always very generous in their voluntary contribution to coffee hour, donating much more than Munich prices for their cuppa!!

Although we're busy serving, it's lovely to have quick chats with people who've been coming for many, many years and also with people who are new to the church - it's something that we really missed during the pandemic and are really happy to be doing it again.

*Penny Dite and Wendy Mountford*

*\* (but never seem to put on weight! Ed)*

## In Memoriam

Janis Wiedemann died on 23<sup>rd</sup>  
October 2022.

A remarkable woman.  
May she rest in peace.



## Congratulations

### **Congratulations to those people who have had birthdays since the last edition:**

17 October	Penny Dite
24 October	Susanne Moskopf
24 October	Janet Day-Strehlow
31 October	Rainer Ullmann
10 November	Jeanne Glenz
12 November	Paul Houghton
15 November	Una Hladek
02 December	Clair Ullmann

### **Congratulations to those who have had wedding anniversaries since the last edition:**

01 September	Loren and Lois Stuckenbruck
04 October	Lloyd and Nurtac Denton

**Congratulations to Lois Stuckenbruck** on having been elected President of the Council of Advice, the canonical committee that advises the Bishop in Charge in carrying out his responsibilities in the Convocation.

**Congratulations and a deep sense of gratitude are due to David Case** whose capacity for leadership, dedication to the Convocation and service to our congregation have been acknowledged in the creation of an award that bears his name.

The David Case Award

For youth leadership in the Convocation

**Congratulations to HyunJin Cho on having been appointed as Choir Director.**  
An interview to get to know her better will follow.

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## Coming Events

15 <sup>th</sup> December	18.45-20.30	The Saints of Song Writing: Advent Edition
16 <sup>th</sup> December	18.30-20.00	Bible Study
18 <sup>th</sup> December	14.00-15.00	Carol Sing in Church of the Ascension
21 <sup>st</sup> December	19.00-20.30	Lessons and Carols in St. Willibrord
22 <sup>nd</sup> December	18.00-20.30	Art and Faith at the Bayerisches National Museum
24 <sup>th</sup> December	22.00-23.15	“Midnight Mass” in St. Willibrord
28 <sup>th</sup> December	19.30-21.30	Vestry Meeting
14 <sup>th</sup> January	14.00-16.00	Women’s Book Discussion Group
15 <sup>th</sup> January	12.00	Bishop’s Visit: Confirmation Service
21 <sup>st</sup> January	10.00-11.30	Racial Justice Book Group
22 <sup>nd</sup> January		Celebration of Jeff Leipsic’s service to the CoA
23 <sup>rd</sup> February		Lent Madness begins: <a href="https://www.lentmadness.org">https://www.lentmadness.org</a>

### Recurring Events

Tuesdays	08.30-9.30	Morning Prayer
Wednesdays	15.00-16.00	Coffee with Dan
Thursdays	19.45-20.30	Compline

For more details see the weekly Announcements and/or visit the Calendar within the CoA Website.

## Answers to the Quiz

1. King Ahaz
2. Mark
3. God is my strength
4. The book of Wisdom in the Apocrypha
5. The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S.Lewis
6. Jingle Bells
7. Calvin Coolidge
8. 1957
9. Indian Ocean
10. Myra in Lycia, today the town of Demre, Antalya, Turkey
11. Carol of the Drum
12. Mexico
13. Isaac Newton
14. Christmas Eve
15. Martin Luther

Photo from the small volume  
***Angels of Munich***

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author

The book can be obtained from the  
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www.muenchnerengel.de  
[www.angelsOfMunich.com](http://www.angelsOfMunich.com)



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# Worship in Nürnberg

Church of the Jakobskirche in downtown Nürnberg:

Church of St. James the Less,  
Jakobsplatz 1,  
90402 Nürnberg

Please come and join us! We would be honoured to have you worship with us. No matter who you are, or where you are on your spiritual journey, you are welcome at St. James the Less.



The wearing of face-masks is recommended but is not compulsory.  
We hold services every second and fourth Sunday at 16:00.  
On Boxing Day (26<sup>th</sup> December) we will hold a service in the Jakobskirche at 14.00.

Check our Facebook page to get the latest information:

Anglican/episcopal church of St James, the Less.  
Our Website is [www.st-james-the-less.de](http://www.st-james-the-less.de)  
<https://www.facebook.com/stjamesnuremberg/>

# Worship in Augsburg

There is a service every Sunday at 16.30 in the

Ev.-Luth. Auferstehungskirche,  
Garmischer Straße 2a, in Augsburg/Hochzoll.

Special services in December:

December 11<sup>th</sup> 16:30 Service of Lessons and Carols, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent

December 18<sup>th</sup> 16:30 Holy Eucharist, 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent

December 25<sup>th</sup> 16:30 Christmas Day Service

The above Services are all hybrid - Zoom 929 3722 6600

December 31<sup>st</sup> 17:00 "Jahresschluss-Gottesdienst" (Saturday) together with the Ev.Luth. Auferstehungskirche congregation (our hosts)



## Notes from the Vestry

*Report on a webinar about **Robert's Rules of Order**, given by The Rt. Rev. Matthew Lynn Riegel, Bishop of the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> October at 16.00 under the auspices of the Academy for Parish Leadership, a program of the European Institute for Christian Studies.*

### **Why (and what are) Robert's Rules of Order?**

There are good reasons for using sound procedures to conduct any meeting. Henry Martyn Robert (the Robert in Robert's Rules of Order) introduced his rules for the orderly running of meetings after chairing a public meeting that degenerated into chaos. He swore that he would never let that happen again and set about the study of parliamentary law.

The rules basically boil down to the following principles:

- Always address the chair (not the other speakers)
- Never attack the person (you can attack the argument)
- Wait your turn (except for a point of order or matter pressing for safety)
- Confine debate to the merits of the pending question (don't go off on a tangent).

The Constitution and Canons of the Convocation stipulate that "The rules of order in force at the preceding meeting of the Convention shall be in force until altered by the Convention; and Robert's Rules of Order shall prevail except as otherwise provided" (Canon 2, Section 4, para. 6). Vestries also operate under Robert's Rules.

This webinar was not simply a lecture. Bishop Riegel littered his presentation with amusing dialogues in which participants were asked to take a role. There was an array of characters in the dialogues, ranging from Zwingli and Erasmus to Mary Queen of Scots and Queen Elizabeth II. When illustrating what he meant by a point of order, he included a comparison of his long snowy white beard and that of our own Lloyd Denton.

While I do not think future vestry meetings are going to be peppered with sentences such as: "Mr Chairman, I rise to a point of information" (said when you want clarification before you vote on a motion that has been amended maybe many times) or "Madam Chair, I rise to a point of order" (said when you think another member at the meeting is not addressing the issue under discussion).

However, we were shown in a light-hearted, yes, fun way how meetings can be conducted in an orderly fashion so that the right of the minority to speak is maintained. If you have lost the thread of a resolution, you have every right to ask the Chair to clarify.

So don't be frightened of meetings or asking questions!

At the AGM next year, five present members of the Vestry are not eligible to stand for re-election. So please prayerfully consider whether you would consider standing. Everyone has something to offer in their own way. And you can have the opportunity to practice using Robert's Rules!

*Janet Day-Strehlow, Senior Warden*

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# Emmauskirche

We experienced the warmest October in Bavaria since records began in 1881, so there has been no issue with church heating. However, this may change. Read on in the language you are comfortable with and you may feel the need to bring your own blanket sometime in the future!

## ***E-Mail from Emmauskirche, 27th October 2022***

Sehr geehrte, liebe Damen und Herren, liebes Emmaus-Team,

aufgrund der Energiekosten und der Gasknappheit wollen und müssen wir die Beheizung der Kirche anders regeln.

An Sonntagen wird in Zukunft - mit Beginn der Heizperiode - die ja wegen der hohen Temperaturen noch nicht begonnen hat - die Automatik erst um 6.30 Uhr statt bisher um 5 Uhr anspringen. Sonntagmittag wird weiterhin bis 12 Uhr geheizt. Die Temperatur wird abgesenkt, allerdings können wir bei unserer Anlage keine bestimmte Temperatur einstellen, sondern müssen experimentieren, was erträglich ist. Bitte geben Sie uns dazu auch Rückmeldung. Wir haben die Sitzkissen auf den Bänken liegen und werden auch Decken anschaffen.

Bei Konzerten bzw. Chorproben in der Kirche sowie besonderen Veranstaltungen wollen wir situationsbezogene Lösungen finden, bitte halten Sie dazu Rücksprache mit uns.

Wir bitten Sie, besonders auch die Church of the Ascension, diese Lösung mitzutragen und hoffen, dass wir gut und wohlbehalten durch den Winter kommen.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen

*Wolfram Nugel, Pfarrer*

## ***Unofficial Translation***

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Emmaus Team

Due to the high cost of energy and to the overall shortage of gas, it is necessary for us to modify the way the church building is heated.

With the beginning of the heating season – which due to the warm weather has not yet started – the time-switch will be set to activate the heating on Sundays at 06.30 rather than at 05.00 which was the previous setting. The heating will, as previously, go off at midday. In addition, the temperature will be reduced – however since there are no temperature sensors throughout the building we must experiment to find out what is acceptable. Please give us some feedback on this. We have put cushions on all the pews and will also purchase some blankets.

For concerts, choir practice sessions and other special events we will find solutions on a case-by-case basis – please discuss these matters with us.

We request you all – especially our friends from the Church of the Ascension – to support us in this situation. Hopefully we will all get through the coming winter in good health and good spirits.

Best Wishes

*Wolfram Nugel, Pastor*



## Lent Madness

If it is Advent, can Lent be far Behind? A “heads up” for February 2023.

A few years ago as I was searching online for the biography of a truly obscure saint, I came upon Lent Madness. Believe it or not, Lent Madness is associated with the Forward Movement who publish Forward Day by Day. Executive Director Scott Gunn, along with Rev. Tim Schenck, are the self-appointed Supreme Executive Committee of Lent Madness, which is an interesting way for us to learn about the people who are included in the church’s Calendar of Saints.

Every year 32 saints are nominated and put into a single elimination bracket (a two-person head-to-head competition).

People like you and me vote for our favorite saint in each pair. The one with the fewest votes is then eliminated. Sixteen saints make it to the Round of the Sainly Sixteen; eight advance to the Round of the Elate Eight; four make it to the Faithful Four; two to the Championship; and the winner is awarded the coveted Golden Halo.

We learn not only biographical information about the saints but as they progress through the tournament we may also be inundated with quotes, legends and even (heaven forbid) saintly kitsch.

Lent Madness has been around since 2010 - where have you been all my life? – and I became addicted sometime during Lent 2020, the year Absalom Jones won the Golden Halo.

Aren’t you just thirsting to learn about Constance of Memphis (no relation to Elvis) and Emma of Hawaii and Felix and Oscar? Join me and the others who take our faith, but not ourselves, seriously. There is no reason for a dreary Lenten discipline.

***At this writing, Lent Madness begins in 112 days and 20 hours and 12 minutes...no 11 minutes.*** So mark your calendars now: I dare you to go online on February 23<sup>rd</sup> and open the 2023 Bracket (head-to-head).

Cribbed from <https://www.lentmadness.org> by Deirdre Tincker



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## Closing Words

The editorial team and the Vestry have many festive wishes for you.  
Can you find the vertically hidden word? We wish you a blessed one!

Friends who bring good	cheer
A year of good	health
Happy contact with	relatives
Flashes of	inspiration
Interesting presents from	Santa
Enriching	travels
Invigorating walks in the	mountains
The joy of children, who are	angels
Laughter of games in the	snow

*Sue*

Christmas day declares that he dwelt amongst us. This is the festival that makes us know, indeed, that we are members of one body; it binds together the life of Christ on earth with his life in heaven; it assures us that Christmas day belongs not to time but to eternity.

*Frederick Denison Maurice: 1805-1872*

## Imprint / Impressum

**Editor:** Sue Morris

**Assistant Editors:** Amanda Höschler, Mitchell Woodard

**Proof-reader (aka The Nitpicker):** Mike Morris

**Layout:** Roger Houghton

Please help us to fill the magazine with the life of the church and send any ideas or contributions for the next issue of **lkon** to the editor for consideration:  
[sue.morris@web.de](mailto:sue.morris@web.de)

Please note ...  
if you want to have anything announced during the church service or in the bulletin, you will need to first run it past the Senior Warden, Janet Day-Strehlow.

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## Back Numbers

You can find all the previous issues of the **lkon** on our website at:  
<https://www.ascension-munich.org/parish-magazine>



The Church of the Ascension is an Anglican/Episcopal Church in the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe, a member of the worldwide Anglican Communion.

We extend a warm welcome to all!

### **Our Purpose and Mission**

We offer worship in English, serving Greater Munich and the surrounding area. We welcome people of all nationalities to join our community and share in our journey towards a deeper knowledge of God as revealed in Jesus Christ.

### **We seek to:**

- Proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ by word and deed
- Celebrate God through beautiful and meaningful worship
- Minister to one another through worship, fellowship, Christian education and pastoral care
- Care for people in the wider community through outreach projects, both alone and together with others.