

INSPIRE

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- * Zooming in on Church Services
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 - and much more.

The Hearty Gardeners of St. John's



Read all about it on pages 16 and 17



St John's Church Ranmoor, Sheffield Parish Office, Ranmoor Parish Centre, 5 Ranmoor Park Road, Sheffield, S10 3GX Tel: 0114 230 1199 Website: www.stjohnsranmoor.org.uk

St John's Church is a community whose vocation is to extend to all people the same welcome that we ourselves have received from God in Christ. Our worship, enriched by our strong musical and choral traditions, is at the heart of our community's shared life. The gospel calls us to lives of discipleship, informed by reflection and marked by care for one another, by a passion for justice, and by a commitment to the service of our local and wider community.

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Cover photo by Philip Walshaw: Sheep grazing near Flash Farm, Stannington

Large print versions of Inspire are available

Foreword

Luke 2:36-38: "There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem."

Dear Friends,



The Presentation of Christ in the Temple (or 'Candlemas') which falls on the 2nd February marks the end of Epiphany season and ushers in a short period of Ordinary Time before Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent on the 17th. It's one of the points in the church year that feels like a threshold or cusp. It's a time both for looking backwards to Christmas and the joy of the incarnation, and forwards to Lent and its focus on the cross.

Luke's account of the Presentation features two of my favourite people in the Bible, Simeon and Anna. We're perhaps more familiar with Simeon as his words of humble astonishment and release form the Nunc Dimittis - one of the canticles at the offices of Choral Evensong and Compline:

"Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace: your word has been fulfilled. My own eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared in the sight of every people; A light to reveal you to the nations and the glopy of your people Israel."

A light to reveal you to the nations and the glory of your people Israel."

Simeon has waited for so long. He has trusted God's promise for so long. He has waited and prayed and now he can face his own mortality because he has seen eternity in a tiny baby. His unbounded joy and relief are tangible. His encounter with this child draws Simeon's view beyond the end of his earthly life and into a glorious eternity.

And then there's the widow Anna, waiting with all her loss and pain. Waiting and praying, trusting and hoping. And to this humble woman God sends Jesus so that she might be the very first evangelist, prophesying about the Son of God.

There are two connected reasons why I have such admiration for Anna. The first is her faith. She waits so long to meet Jesus. She is patient and prayerful and God sends Jesus to her. The second is how she waits. She is in the temple every day, praying and fasting - there is a rhythm to her waiting.

Now, as we remember how Jesus has been revealed to the world as the Son of God at the Feast of the Epiphany, we also look ahead to Lent where our focus turns to the cross. This moment in the temple is a key part of our journey of faith from the vulnerable baby in the straw to the dying young man on the cross. As Jesus is presented by his parents in the temple, we are reminded by Simeon and Anna of God's incalculable generosity - the super-abundance of the gift to us of his Son.

Covid-19 has now been having an impact on our lives for almost a year. We have all, to some extent, felt what it is to be made to wait. As we continue through these dark weeks before the arrival of spring and as we approach Lent, this is a good time to engage with Anna's example of active waiting and to think about the rhythms or habits that might be helpful to us (and others) over the coming weeks and months.

Here are some suggestions for how we might wait actively and, in so doing, share in small but significant ways the Good News of God's generous love:

- Pray every day (choose a regular time to talk to God)
- Read the Bible regularly (perhaps with Bible reading notes)
- Ring a friend to see how they are
- Donate to the Burngreave Foodbank

- Give a gift to a lonely neighbour
- Thank your shop workers, delivery drivers and postal workers
- Consider volunteering to help a local charity, the Red Cross or the NHS, or pray for their work
- Offer a skill to others (sewing, woodwork, music, etc.)
- Try to be positive in online interactions
- Encourage others to join worship online via Zoom or Facebook

Matt

Georgina Hulse Singing Teacher



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Lockdown in the Editor's Chair



On Christmas Eve, I read the following words in a national newspaper that were written on 24th December, 1920: "We may resign ourselves to a distinctly anxious Winter and Spring. Bad times alternate with good seasons and we must take both as they come and make the best of them." Fast forward a hundred years and these words seem as appropriate now as they were then.

Looking back on Christmas, I found myself reflecting on the words of the well-known song "Have yourself a Merry Little Christmas". Judy Garland sang it in 1944 for a scene in the film 'Meet Me in St Louis' and the lyrics couldn't be more apt for our current situation. It is the musical equivalent of a warm hug; a narrative of festive hope, telling of a nostalgia for past times - "happy days of yore", but faith in the future - "from now on, our troubles will be out of sight". Well, not quite yet....!

After Christmas, I was walking past our local public house/carvery and I noticed that they still had their sign outside saying "Book early for Christmas to avoid disappointment". That didn't work, did it?! And then I started wondering when the signs might appear inviting people to book early for Easter. Maybe we should buy people a scotch egg for Easter, rather than a chocolate one, I mused!

As we look forward optimistically for a happier 2021, I'm looking back again to more than a century ago when tuberculosis was a widespread, deadly disease, killing one in seven of all human beings. Interestingly, the tuberculosis bacteria are spread via infected respiratory droplets, such as those that are spread when ill people cough or sneeze, or even speak. Does this sound familiar? Well, in the early 1900s, a German physician called Robert Koch (1843-1910) discovered the agent that causes tuberculosis and worked on a vaccine for its treatment and prevention. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in Physiology or Medicine. The effective vaccine, now known as the Bacille Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccine, has been in use since....yes, you guessed it....1921. It's a rather fitting centenary and, in the current stage of the pandemic, it gives us hope for our future.

Philip Walshaw



Young People's Activity Page

REACH Update: The young people of St John's have been busy even though we have not been able to gather together in person for most of 2020. As you will have read in the weekly newsletter, REACH have been supporting Roundabout (a charity working with Sheffield's young homeless) by giving up the comfort of their beds for a night and either sleeping somewhere else in the house or, in some cases, braving night time temperatures in the garden.

Some participants share their experiences below:

Dom writes: 'I decided to sleep out in a tent for a night. I had a thin foam mat and sleeping bag, without a pillow, and this certainly gave me a greater appreciation for how uncomfortable it must be to 'sleep out' every night. I had about 4 layers on (plus hat and gloves!), and despite only getting down to around 10 degrees overnight, it was still rather chilly when I woke up in the morning!



Ultimately I was dry, and inside a small, sealed tent... This was an incredibly mild experience, compared to sleeping outside in the depths of winter.'



Anna and Isla even persuaded their dad to join them!

Poppy and Willow write: 'We decided to do our 'sleep in' in the lounge. It was a struggle at first to fall asleep on the wood floor and much colder than being in our cosy beds, even without duvets! We surprised ourselves by lasting until 6am before we finished the night on the sofas...

Our experience provoked thinking...along the lines of.....We think we can all empathise with people who are homeless, but doing the Sleep In has allowed us to realise just how awful it must be...all we had to do was sleep inside on a wood floor, we knew that we had had enough to eat before 'bed' and that we would get breakfast when we woke up. We knew we would be able to shower and brush our teeth, we knew we were safe from harm and that ultimately it was for only one night.'

Well done and a huge 'thank you' to all who took part. The Sleep-In has raised well over £500 for Roundabout and will go towards the vital work they do providing shelter, support and life skills to young people aged 16-24 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. **Matt**



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Walking in the Light of Christ towards a greener future.

Dr Cathy Rhodes, Diocesan Environment Officer

And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8

At our Diocesan Development Day on 10th October, 2020, the environmentalist and theologian Ruth Valerio quoted this verse to challenge us to respond to the climate and ecological crisis facing our planet. She urged us to act justly for the sake of people living in poverty, and for the sake of the earth and all living things which are precious to God. We must respond for our own sake as our wellbeing is linked to that of the wider world, and ultimately for God's sake. The threads of mercy, social justice and climate care are part of the unbreakable link between God, people and the earth.



The Church of England has called for the whole Church to pray, speak and act prophetically on environmental issues which threaten the flourishing of the whole of creation. General Synod voted in February 2020 to reach net zero emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases by 2030. For the Diocese

of Sheffield this means working together to reduce the carbon footprint of churches, clergy housing, voluntary aided schools, diocesan academy trusts, theological education, work-related travel and Church House. A net zero carbon steering group chaired by Bishop Sophie Jelley will coordinate this work. At Diocesan Synod on 28th November, a motion was carried to: -declare a climate and ecological emergency

-support the 2020 General Synod motion for all parts of the Church to reach 'Net Zero' carbon emissions by 2030

-request the Diocesan Environment Working Group to produce a detailed updated Environment and Climate Justice Policy

-commit to the A Rocha UK Eco Church and Eco Diocese programme

Our government has already declared a climate emergency and so have Rotherham, Barnsley, Doncaster and Sheffield Councils. Twenty-two diocesan synods have carried or are planning to debate a net-zero motion, and 23 have registered or planned to register as an Eco Diocese (Church Times, 6/11/20). So by declaring a climate emergency and registering as an Eco Diocese we are joining a growing movement for change. As people of hope and with the help of God, we pray God will bless us in this work as we walk in the Light of Christ towards a greener future.

What is Eco Church?

Eco Church/Diocese is a web-based award scheme organised by A Rocha UK. This Christian charity has a vision for all churches to care for creation as an integral part of loving our neighbours and following God faithfully, working with local communities for a more sustainable future.



A free online survey and supporting resources at <u>https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk</u> help the church express care for God's

world in worship and teaching, looking after buildings and land, and congregational lifestyles. Engaging with the local community and in global campaigns is part of Eco Church and includes toilet twinning which we have already done for all of our toilets thanks to the generosity of the St John's congregation. As you all know we have a Bronze award now and are working towards our Silver award!

Bronze, Silver and Gold awards are based on survey results. Sheffield is a registered Eco Diocese, aiming for a Bronze award. This requires 21 churches (10%) to register with the scheme: currently we have 16 registered. Ten churches (5%) & Church House will need an Eco Church award: currently we have six awards. Embedding environmental issues in ministerial education, celebrating local initiatives, an environmental policy, ethical investments, and working with other Dioceses/faith groups are other requirements. There will be an Eco Church event at Sheffield Cathedral on 12 June, 2021 so please save the date! For further information about issues in this article or if you want to get involved please email Cathy Rhodes at <u>environment@sheffield.anglican.org</u>



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The Hearty Gardeners of St. John's

Before Matt and Clare moved into their new home on Barnfield Road there was a brief window, after the previous tenants moved out, for members of our congregation to help out tidying the garden for them. Malcolm and Janet Anker and Pauline Heath all live close by, so were only too happy to do this. Along with Mary Grover, they started clearing weeds and cutting back overgrown shrubs and finding a path that had been covered with debris. Malcolm was round the back of the house cutting back very overgrown ivy and other plants and even found an apple tree. They were able to get a large skip which, after 2 or 3 days of clearing, they managed to fill. It was all great fun to do, as they were all outside, keeping themselves to their own tasks but near enough to chat to each other.

Having done the side of the house they moved to the front where further cutting back and digging out was done and Sally Booker, Wendy Weeks and Janet Atkinson joined in. Malcolm was still clearing the back garden and bringing more armfuls for the skip! Janet cut the grass with shears as access to electricity was not possible unless there were any workmen in the house. They were pleased they managed to get it all done, as best they could, given the time of year, as the following week it started to rain on a daily basis!

Photographs are included on the front and back inside covers. Well done and grateful thanks to all concerned for the time and effort given.

Sally Booker has written an ode to the hearty gardeners of St John's, appropriately entitled 'We can't see the Woods for the Trees', which is reproduced on the following page.

We can't see the Woods for the Trees

When Clare and Matt went to see their house Their garden was quite a jungle! Janet and Pauline took it in hand And recruited a hardy, green fingered band! There was Pauline with her pick axe And Mary with her mattock And Janet in a frenzy with her shears.....

Malcolm has unearthed a secret garden in a place Where the sunbathing can take place! The veg garden will abound When we've cleared the bloomin' ground, And found the secret path to the front door. Now the skip is overflowing, And there's really just no knowing How the garden with this band has been transformed!

And now you CAN see the Woods for the Trees!

Answers to the Festive Quiz:

(1) Roast Turkey (2) Pigs in blankets (3) Wine (4) Mistletoe (5) Christmas (6) Silent night (7) Garland (8) Mince pies (9) Frankincense (10) Jingle bells (11) Plum pudding (12) Santa Claus

Entries were received from Janet and Malcolm Anker, Ann Bird, Joy Bowler, Mark Gregory, Pauline Heath, Steve and Lynn Lawless and Marion Taylor. The winner was Marion Taylor, who receives a box of chocolates.

ST JOHN'S CHURCH, RANMOOR Welcome to our Daily Online Services

Monday to Saturday 9am Morning Prayer

Monday to Thursday 8pm Compline

Sundays

10.30 Parish Communion (ZOOM & Facebook live) 6.30pm Choral Evensong (ZOOM & Facebook live)

ZOOM is easy to use:

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Download the app if you have a smart phone or device or open the link which we will send you upon request

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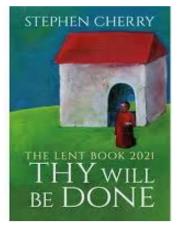
Parish Registers:

There were no Weddings or Baptisms during December and January

Please remember those who have died: Jeff Bailey, Charlie Ward and Geoffrey Weeks

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted". Our thoughts and prayers are with the friends and family of those names listed.

Lent Study Course 2021



The season of Lent offers an opportunity intentionally to set a little time aside for reflection and study. This year's Lent Course will be based on the Bloomsbury Lent Book for 2021 'Thy Will Be Done' by Stephen Cherry (see biography below). The book takes an in-depth look at the Lord's Prayer and uses six key words from the prayer as themes for reflection:

Heaven	Earth	Bread
Temptation	Forgiveness	Glory

Everyone is very welcome. No previous experience of study courses is necessary! The sessions will include space for reflection, prayer and conversation, based on the short chapters in each of the six topic areas mentioned above.

We are delighted to be linking again with our friends at Nether Green Methodist Church who will be joining us for the Course. Do let friends from other churches know about the course if their church is unable to run one this year. Each week there will be two session times available:

Tuesdays 2.30pm - 3.30pm (23rd February to 30th March incl.) Wednesdays 7.00pm - 8.00pm (24th February to 31st March incl.)

Books will be purchased centrally and distributed to participants in good time ahead of the first session. If you would like to join the Course, please get in touch with Claire Webber in the Parish Office (email: administrator@stjohnsranmoor.org.uk | phone 0114 230 1199).



Stephen Cherry is Dean of King's College, Cambridge. Formerly he was a Canon of Durham Cathedral and has extensive experience in parish ministry and college chaplaincy, having been Chaplain of King's College, Cambridge for five years and Rector of All Saints with Holy Trinity in Loughborough for twelve. His post at Durham combined cathedral ministry with the leadership of the Diocesan Resource Team, and he was also responsible for Continuing Ministerial Development.



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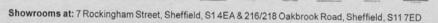
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ZOOMing in: Live Streaming our Services by Dom Dakin

Ever since we began to broadcast services online, the tech set up has undergone many refinements. Having only joined the 'tech team' in September, what I hope to do here is to fill you in on how we're currently live streaming from Church to your living rooms.



Before we get into the finer details (though I hope not to bore you!) a big thank you to the pioneering team of Cathy, Clare, Brian and Joe who got all the tech up and running. The tech team has since grown in number (though we'd be very happy to hear from any

prospective members!) and I'm very grateful to those in church running the live streaming, and those at home screen sharing. So – without this sounding too much like a tech training session – let's start with an overview of how you can currently access both Sunday services online. Zoom has been the mainstay of our broadcasting, with the majority of the congregation still joining via this increasingly popular platform. For a few months now, we've also been livestreaming our services on Facebook Live – which can be followed live at the time of broadcast, or watched back later (like BBC iPlayer) via the church's Facebook Page.

Zoom allows for contributions from home – be they readings, intercessions, or singing. These can also be heard on the Facebook broadcast (only the sound, not your camera's video). The sound and video from within church is identical on both platforms; the key

difference is that on Zoom you can see other members of the



congregation, and chat before and after the service.

Facebook recordings are also proving popular; a couple of our Evensongs have had over 800 views! Facebook Live services are easier to access (don't even need to have an account) and can be watched on older devices where downloading Zoom may not be an option.

Anyway, end of platform comparisons! For those of you who haven't been into church for a while (or have, and wondered what that little thing balanced on a tripod was) here's a few things we've installed to

make the link between Church and your homes:

Computer – in November, thanks to a very generous individual's donation, we were able to upgrade the computer in church to a far speedier model than our old second-hand one. This was greatly needed, as we were struggling to even run Zoom on the old one, let alone everything else!

Microphones – we already had a sound system in church, to amplify voices through the speakers. The challenge – but one that Joe handled very ably – was to link the existing sound desk to the computer. We also had to add microphones to pick up the organ and choir – something we've never had to do before. For a typical service, we're balancing the 2 mics worn by the clergy, I mic for readers/intercessors, and 4 (2 by the front pillars, and 2 hanging in the Chancel) for the organ and choir – so we hope you'll forgive us if we're late unmuting on occasion!

Camera – new software has allowed us to create multiple camera 'angles'; using just one camera, we can now zoom in to certain parts of the church – you may have noticed this when there is a reading from the lectern, for example. In the future, we may upgrade the camera to give a clearer image.

Big Screen – when there are contributions from home, the sound is

played aloud in church, and the video displayed to both the congregation and clergy on a big screen. For the rest of the service. those on Zoom are shown on a 'gallery view', allowing those in church to feel connected to those the ioining



service from home. A lovely feature of Communion services is when the Church is filled with voices from home during the exchanging of the Peace! Don't worry – names are never shown, and individual videos are all pretty small. Of course, whilst the church is closed, this is the only way for clergy to feel connected to the congregation.

During the current Lockdown, we're trying not to feel the pressure of making sure the live streams run smoothly! The recordings of previous services on Facebook have proved very useful for extracting much of the music we enjoy during services at the moment. Otherwise, it's business as usual for the tech team, albeit with more of the service coming from home, and hence more buttons to press.

A year ago, it had never crossed my mind that we would soon be live streaming and recording services – and yet now it's the norm! Whilst watching online can never compare to being in Church, we hope that you've been finding our broadcasts an acceptable alternative in the circumstances!

When we're stood at the back of church, headphones on, fingers poised on as many buttons as possible, it can be hard to work out what you, the congregation, are hearing and seeing at home. So if you have any comments regarding online services – however big or small – please do drop us an email: <u>sjronlineservices@gmail.com</u>

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Swimming Wild and Free (Part I) by Alison Wooding



It's lovely to be asked to share my story with you about how I've become an Open Water Swimmer and the way it is helping me to heal and grow. My wild swimming adventure began late last August. I was locked in the grief of having lost my sister Jen in June after her yearlong battle with Leukaemia was ended by contracting Covid-19. Ten

days later, one of my dearest friends, Annie O'Connor, passed away suddenly and unexpectedly of natural causes aged 41. I've known grief before, but the shock of losing two so young and so central to my life sent me, understandably, into a downward spiral of grief. I was just about managing to work but for months I felt like I was drowning in sorrow. My heart was broken and I cried an ocean of tears and was just numb.

Annie was an inspirational woman of faith, full of adventure and fun. I will be eternally grateful to Annie as she taught me how to play and how to really enjoy the fullness of life with all abandon, which was met with some concern by some of the more conservative friends I have. After her death, Annie's family found a quote in one of her journals that read, 'Don't just live the length of your life... Live the breadth of it too!'

I was so inspired by Jen's determination and by Annie's zest for life that as I meandered through grief, I knew in my depths that I wanted to honour them by living my life to the fullest, not just the length but the breadth, height and depth of it!

One evening, as I was reflecting on the things that I wished I had been brave enough to do, and wild swimming and especially the prospect of Ice Swimming came to the fore. I so wanted to try it but was scared. So, the next day I was booked into A Swimming Club in Wath, for a coached lesson in Open Water Swimming. To my delight, the coach signed me off as a competent and confident swimmer that same day so I was able to join the club and swam there most days through September. I was completely addicted! Alas, Wath is quite a drive from my home, but I had I heard about others in St John's swimming in the plunge pool at Rivelin, so decided to give that a go.

My first plunge at Rivelin was a very comical experience. I went one day in early October, pre-dawn, to give it a try. I was very safety conscious, as I had learned the importance of knowing how one was to get out of the water safely. As I sat on the rock that I had seen others jump from in the summer, waiting to get in, I realised it was a bit of a drop to the water and therefore, one must have to pull oneself up to get out. I had seen Octogenarians swimming in there, so assumed getting out mustn't be a problem, but in the interest of safety, I securely tied my microfiber towel to a deeply embedded tree root, just in case I needed something to hold onto.



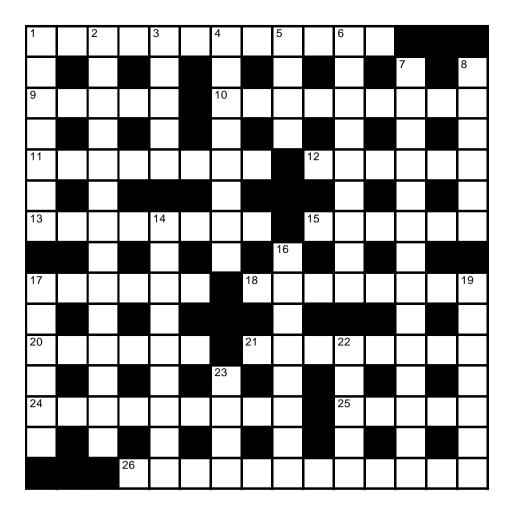
Then, into the plunge pool I plunged! The water was biting, but as I had been swimming most days, my body was acclimatised to the cold and the extreme physical reaction had by now awakened me from the numbness of my grief and had started to calm my stress. The plunge pool is just plain FUN! I knew (pre-expensive neoprene swimming gloves and boots purchase!) that it was time to get out when my fingers went numb. Well, numb indeed they were after a few minutes, so I swam back to the rock of my entry, only to realise it

was an overhang and there was no foothold beneath.....

(And there we must leave you with this cliffhanger of a story! Don't miss Part 2 in the next issue. Ed.)

Cryptic crossword compiled by 'Rookery Nook'

Send your entries either by post to Michael Hannon, 14 Ranmoor Cliffe Road, S10 3HB, or by email to <u>mikehannon@hotmail.co.uk</u> by Sunday 14th February. The winner's name will be drawn from a hat and the prize will be a rather good box of chocolates. The solution will be published in the March issue of *Inspire*.



Across

- I Supporter of bishops retuned special piano. (12)
- 9 Succeeding former king. (5)
- 10 Staff miraculously producing sprouts and verbascum! (6,3)
- II Devotees en route to Canterbury? (8)
- 12 Leaders in public life face fever and epidemic. (6)
- 13 Pepys' lie misrepresented falling sickness. (8)
- 15 Court decision promulgated late in the year concerning drug. (6)
- 17 From that time on the church concealed Nuncio's original letter.(6)
- 18 Some of Masefield's Cargoes going cheap. (3,5)
- 20 Preserve guts. (6)
- 21 A city pal ruined not what one might expect. (8)
- 24 Head of the Church calling for port! (9)
- **25** Nocturnal armadillo hiding anxiety about danger. (5)
- 26 Provincial bishop must change title poor man! (12)

Down

- I Obscure movie excerpts discovered in Elstree after evacuation.(7)
- 2 Elitist leaning redefined cultured classes. (14)
- 3 Personal supporter's life-work drained of energy. (5)
- 4 Composer of sacred songs sends clairvoyant round the bend. (8)
- 5 Something the Greeks played during family reunions. (4)
- 6 Woman supported by posh Liberal chaps at opening of tribunal announces end of marriage. (9)
- 7 Condemn a tenor charging for papal plainsong. (9,5)
- 8 Stick little flyer there, wasting time. (6)
- 14 Absolve divorcee smashing teacup around head of lover. (9)
- 16 A place to contemplate one's present options in the Cathedral perhaps? (4,4)
- 17 Bill gave permission for monument. (6)
- 19 Wise king alone overlooks monk losing weight. (7)
- 22 Anniversary marking Thirty Years War? Let's hope not! (5)
- 23 Visionary bishop's sphere of influence limited by Rome at the outset. (4)



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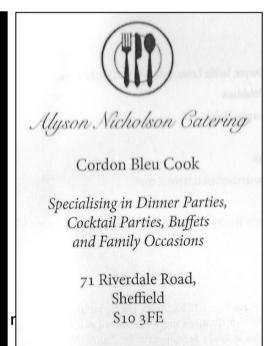


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Inspire

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Contributing to Inspire

As always you should feel free to contribute to the magazine: articles, news, photographs, and anything else that you feel might be suitable. Any contributions received after the date shown below will be considered for publication in the following issue. We cannot guarantee that everything we receive will be published. The deadline for contributions to the March 2021 edition is Monday, 15th February, 2021.

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