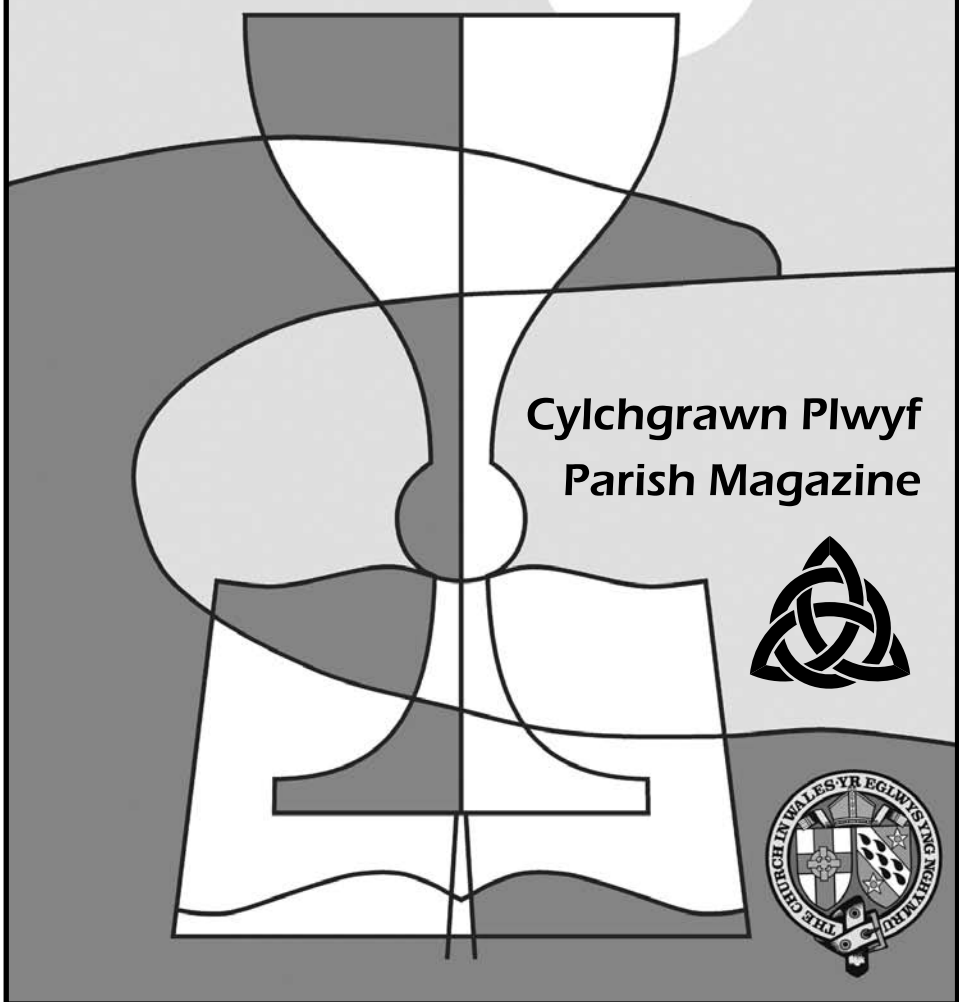


LLANDUDNO



**Cylchgrawn Plwyf
Parish Magazine**



30p

December 2008

Services

Holy Trinity Church, Mostyn Street

Sundays

- 8.00 am Holy Eucharist
- 10.30 am Sung Eucharist (1st, 3rd & 4th Sundays)
- Matins followed by shortened Eucharist (2nd Sunday)
- Combined Matins and Eucharist (5th Sunday)
- 5.00 pm Evening Prayer
- 6.00 pm Exploring Worship - in Church Hall (2nd Sunday unless notified otherwise)

Weekdays

- 8.30 am Morning Prayer (Tue, Wed & Thurs)
- Holy Eucharist with Morning Prayer (Fri)
- 9.00 am Holy Eucharist (Wed)
- 11.00 am Holy Eucharist (Thurs & Major Saints' Days)
- Holy Eucharist in Welsh (Sat)
- 5.00 pm Evening Prayer (Tue, Wed, Thurs & Fri)

St Tudno's Church Great Orme

- 9.00 am Morning Prayer (Sat)
- 11.00 am Open Air Service (Sun from end of May to end of September)
- On the first Sunday of each month, the service is followed by a shortened Eucharist in the church.

The pattern of Sunday and Weekday services sometimes changes. Please check the calendar in each month's magazine and the weekly bulletin.

The Rector is in Holy Trinity church on most Saturday mornings from 11.30 - 12.00 to see parishioners on any matter – for confessions, spiritual guidance, the booking of baptisms or weddings etc.

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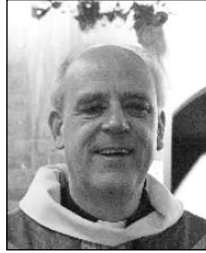
The deadline for copy for any edition is the 7th of the previous month. Please leave copy in box near pulpit in Holy Trinity Church or e-mail:

editor@llandudno-parish.org.uk

Copy may be on disk, printed or handwritten.

From the Rectory

It is impossible to imagine life without language and particularly the building blocks of language – words. Words enable us to communicate effectively with each other and yet for much of the time we hardly think about them, just using them as a means to an end.



Having said this, it's also true that many people are deeply interested in words and in their origins and meanings. For example, a year or so ago there was a popular series of TV programmes called *Balderdash and Piffle* in which the presenter Victoria Corren and her team set out to discover new words and phrases from various parts of the country and to persuade the editors of the Oxford Dictionary to include them in their prestigious publication. Also the game of Scrabble is as popular as ever and many people enjoy word search games in newspapers etc. So there is plenty of evidence that we don't all take words for granted.

Because we use words to communicate with each other, it's not surprising that in Biblical times it was believed that God also used words to communicate with us. Indeed the prophets of the Old Testament believed themselves to be mouthpieces of God – charged to speak his words to the people of Israel.

The concept of 'the word of the Lord' which occurs many times in the Old Testament actually came to mean not simply the words that God may have used as such, but his message to the people whatever that might be at any particular time. This word or message had power and effectiveness appropriate to the situation to which it was addressed. So in the book of the prophet Isaiah God proclaims that 'the word issuing from my mouth... will not return to me empty without accomplishing my purpose and succeeding in the task for which I sent it.' (Isaiah 55:11)

When he wrote his Gospel, St. John did not concern himself with the details of the birth of Jesus; maybe he assumed everyone knew them anyway. Rather he went to the heart of the mystery of the incarnation and in the prologue of his Gospel used the Old Testament concept of the word (or message) of God in a new way. He combined it with the Greek concept of the *logos* (word) to describe Jesus as a preexisting divine Person through whom in the beginning everything was made. The followers of Jesus were now able to see Him as the very embodiment of God's word, God's message. Furthermore they were able to see that in Jesus God had not just spoken to his people but had actually come to dwell among them, to pitch

his tent with them and identify himself with them.

One of the highlights of Christmas for me is when the great Christmas Gospel – the prologue from John I – is proclaimed. We hear those wonderful words: *'In the beginning was the Word and the Word was God...'* and then the reading builds up phrase by phrase until the great and magnificent climax is reached: **'and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us'**. Sometimes the Gospel reader genuflects (goes down on one knee) at this point to emphasise the significance of what has been said – God has become flesh and has

dwelt among us – the embodiment of God's message and his very being. This is an awesome moment – a moment to pause, to wonder and to adore.

Christmas is usually such a hectic time and there is so much to occupy our minds and thoughts. So please make a space to welcome Christ, the Word made flesh, this Christ–Mass. Take time, not to try to puzzle out what it all means but simply to allow Christ to pitch his tent with **you**, to share **your** life and to become flesh in **your** heart.

Fr John

Rector's Notes

Christingle Service 2008

You may have noted the absence of any reference to a Christingle Service in the Calendar for this month. We are hoping to have a Christingle but the date had not yet been fixed when this edition of the magazine went to press. We will let you know when it is to be as soon as possible.

World Aids Day Service

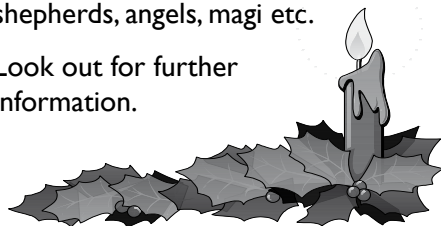
In last month's magazine there was a reference to a World Aids Day Service to be held on the 1st December. This will not now take place, we hope to have such a service next year.

Church involvement in the Christmas Parade

For the first time this year the churches, through Cytûn, have been invited by Llandudno Town Council to take part in the Town Christmas Parade on Saturday 6th December.

The plan is that children from the member churches will take part, some forming a nativity tableau on a float and others walking behind dressed as shepherds, angels, magi etc.

Look out for further information.



News from New Zealand

Kia ora! (Be well, be healthy) and Hi from New Zealand!

When our whim of a year ago turned to a half-baked idea; and then a proper idea; and then to our outright move in September, we thought that in the intervening time we'd given ourselves plenty of time to think of most things. So how did we forget the weather? We're British after all. Within the last five weeks, I have bought (out of necessity) a full-brimmed sun hat and Jacqui has bought thermal underwear and pyjamas for herself and sun-tops, shorts and woolly jumpers for the girls. We have had hot blasts from Indonesia and bone-chilling gales from Antarctica in the space of 24 hours. This is a steep learning curve.

We like Christchurch so far. It really is a 'Garden City' and full of gentle, generous and welcoming people. We have settled in a lovely suburb called Cashmere (what an ironic reminder of the Great Orme goats that destroyed my garden on Llwynon Terrace), at the foot of the mountains that overlook the city. Erin likes Cashmere Primary School and Grace is thriving in the open spaces, parks and gardens.

We have been to a number of churches in the area so far and they are absolutely charming. Those that we've been to are timber built and date from the Victorian and Edwardian era. They are

plain but cosy and the small spaces have a comfortable feel to them. The services have consisted of a bewildering array of traditional New Zealand Anglican to full-on evangelical. I still hadn't got used to the Church in Wales format! But, whatever the order of the liturgy and the vocabulary that is used, it remains recognisably Anglican.

I have been to the Cathedral a couple of times and that is the place I like best so far and may settle in to. The cathedral is built in the same style as Holy Trinity, but on a slightly grander scale, but could be easily mistaken for a British Parish church in its presentation. More about the Cathedral next time.

Thank you to all of you who sent us on our way with kind messages and cards and for the time being a Happy Christmas and my very Best Wishes to you all for a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Richard Cubie



*Cathedral Square, Christchurch.
Philo Vivero GNU Licence*

Letter to the Editor

Two Cheers for St Luke's

I was pleased to be able to attend the recent coffee morning on behalf of St Luke's hospital. 'Friendly food and delicious staff' perhaps sums up the event. The cake I brought home was totally and wonderfully disgusting! – it kept the family happy for three or four days, but did nothing to reduce our waistlines. I'm sure the morning raised an excellent sum to support the valuable and greatly appreciated work of St Luke's. But ...

... I enquired whether the coffee on sale was Fairtrade, only to find out that, alas, it was not. I understand that the coffee was kindly donated, but this is no excuse

It is, I believe, diocesan policy that all churches in the diocese are Fairtrade churches. A condition of using the church premises, whether by a church or non-church organisation, should therefore be that they are obliged to abide by the Fairtrade policy, just as much as they must abide by health and safety policies. I would ask the PCC to ensure this is the case in future. Then, while we are raising money for valuable causes at home and abroad, we shall also be helping some of the poorest people in the world to earn an honest living.

Might I suggest that any organisation that does not use Fairtrade coffee (and

other Fairtrade products, where these are available) should be required to display the following sign?

Garth

The coffee you are drinking was
UNFAIRLY TRADED

The manufacturer, shipper and retailer made a good profit, but the producers were exploited and not given a fair price for their goods and labour.

They remain in poverty.

ENJOY YOUR COFFEE



LADIES

Come and join us for a Christmas night on Friday, December 19th at 7.30 pm for a Three Course Meal at the Links Hotel.

Price £14.95.

Please see Judith for details.

Christmas Fair 2008





This event was held on Saturday 15th November and produced a very successful outcome in terms of the camaraderie generated by those involved, the goodwill of those who supported it by their attendance to buy etc, and the financial aspect.

The final figure was £839.50 raised – a really fantastic effort by all concerned – a very **BIG THANKYOU** to all.



From the Parish Registers

Holy Baptism

Sept 26th: Sian Elizabeth Bolton
Abigail Patricia Bolton
Bethany Rhiannon Thomas
Ffion Louise Thomas
all of Ronald Avenue, Llandudno Junction

Sept 26th: Emma Ceris Williams
Theo Lewis Bennett
all of Clifton Road, Llandudno

The Departed

Oct 6th: David Mayo Rees (74)
of Charleston Road, Penrhyn Bay
(Service at Holy Trinity followed by Cremation at Colwyn Bay)

Oct 14th: Margaret Jones (90)
of Llwynon Road, Great Orme
(Cremation at Colwyn Bay)

Oct 20th: Arthur Grahame Berningham Winter (81)
of Queen Elizabeth Court, Craig-y-don
(Service at Holy Trinity followed by Cremation at Colwyn Bay)

Daisy Roberts' Family

For a number of years Christopher Platt has been tracing his wife's family tree and her great aunt, Daisy Roberts, used to live about half way up the Great Orme. He can vaguely remember the house from when they paid a visit to her a good twenty or more years ago.

Back in 1997 he wrote to St.Tudno's because he believed she was buried there

with her husband. I got a reply from the then Rector, Philip Cousins. He said that they had both been cremated at Colwyn Bay crematorium. He also said that their son lived on Llywnon Road on the Orme. They were supposed to be going to Anglesey that year for a holiday and Mr. Roberts had said he would like them to call in.

However things did not go according to plan and they never got there. Shortly after they moved house and ended up in Orkney. They would still like to get in touch with Mr Roberts and were wondering if anyone knew whether he

was still at the above address.

Chris Platt's address is: Trocaire, St. Margaret's Hope, ORKNEY, KW17 2RN. or harringtoncav@btinternet.com.

Congratulations Rose

This is a photo of Mrs Rose Mason, a House Communicant and indoor member of the Mothers' Union, on her recent 90th birthday surrounded by three generations of her family. Rose, who has not been able to come to church for some years now still takes a keen interest in the life of the parish

and supports us in a number of ways including helping the parish by making the little pouches for the 'Cross in your pockets' which are sold in the Mustard Seed Shop in Holy Trinity.

Many congratulations on your 90th Rose, and thanks for what you continue to do for us.



Do This in Remembrance of Me

A series about the Eucharist by Father John

Part 7 – Proclaiming the Lord’s death until he comes.

In the first century AD Christians had a very strong belief that Christ would soon return in glory, and there was a deep longing for the day when he would come. This longing is reflected at the end of St. Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians when he proclaims: ‘*Maranatha – come Lord*’ (1 Cor 16:22); and at the end of Revelation where John writes ‘*He who gives this testimony says: “Yes I am coming soon!” Amen, come, Lord Jesus!*’

It seems that this sense of longing for the return of Christ was felt particularly strongly when the early Christians gathered together to share in the Eucharist. The powerful sense of his presence they felt as they celebrated this sacramental meal made them long all the more for his Coming. And so St. Paul, in his teaching on the Eucharist in 1 Corinthians, draws the past, present and future together when he tells writes: ‘*Every time you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord, until he comes*’.

It would seem that the Aramaic word ‘*Maranatha*’ (meaning ‘*Come Lord*’) which appears in 1 Corinthians and Revelation, was said as part of the Eucharistic liturgy in these ancient times.

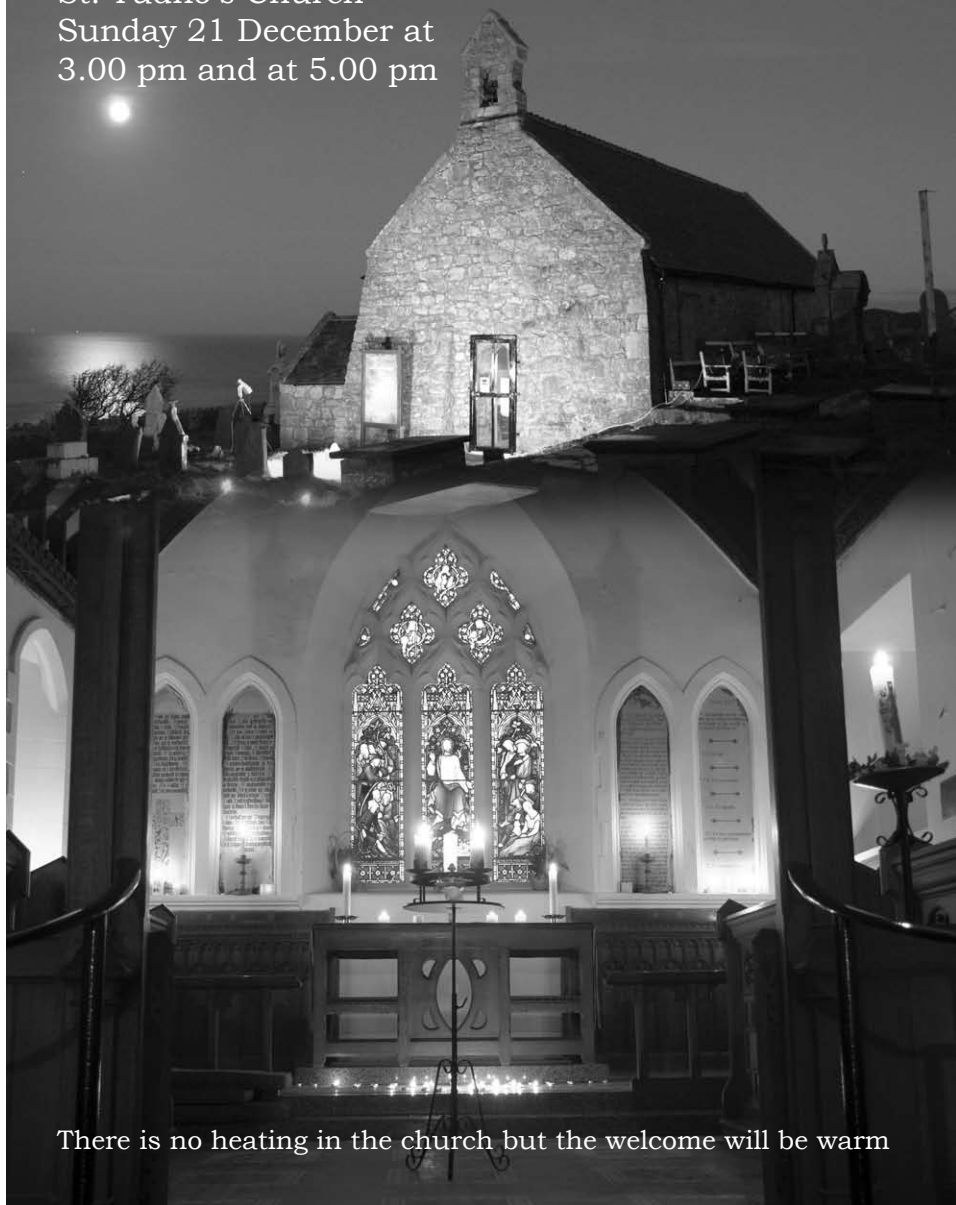
G.B. Caird writes: ‘*Week after week that prayer was spoken and answered as the risen Christ made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of the bread. As they gathered to “proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes,” the past event of the Cross and the future of the Parousia met in the sacramental moment of the present*’ (The Revelation of St John the Divine, A & C Black 1966).

All this is, of course, still reflected in the liturgy of our Church today. In the Eucharistic Prayer of the 1984 rite we speak of Christ who in his holy Gospel has commanded us ‘*to continue, a perpetual memorial of that his precious death until his coming again*’.

After 2000 years of Christian history we do not perhaps have such a strong sense of the imminent coming of the Lord as the early Church did and yet this looking to the future is still a vital aspect of the Eucharist. When we share in the Eucharist and ‘*proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes*’, we look forward to the moment when the time for sacraments will cease and we shall meet the Lord and look upon His face; the moment when all pain and suffering will end and justice and truth shall prevail; the time when all things are consummated and fulfilled. When we come to the altar of God and receive Communion let us cry with longing from the depths of our hearts ‘*Maranatha – Come Lord Jesus!*’

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

St. Tudno's Church
Sunday 21 December at
3.00 pm and at 5.00 pm



There is no heating in the church but the welcome will be warm

Calendar for December

Mon 1st	St. Andrew, Apostle 11.00 am Holy Eucharist
Tues 2nd	10.00 am Julian Meditation Group – Stella Maris
Thurs 4th	10.00 am Guild of St. Raphael Meeting 11.00 am Eucharist with ministry of healing
Sat 6th	Town Christmas Parade with participation by Cytûn member churches' children
Sun 7th	Second Sunday of Advent Services at the usual times
Thurs 9th	7.30 pm MU Advent Quiet Evening
Sun 14th	Third Sunday of Advent Services at the usual times
Thurs 18th	7.00 pm Hospices' Carol Service at Holy Trinity
Sun 21st	Fourth Sunday of Advent Morning services at the usual times 3.00 pm Carols by candlelight at St. Tudno's (#1) 5.00 pm Carols by candlelight at St. Tudno's (#2) No Evening Prayer at Holy Trinity
Tue 23rd	7.30 pm 'O come, O come Emmanuel' – a short time of preparation for Christmas
Wed 24th	Christmas Eve 11.00 am Holy Eucharist 5.00 pm Crib Service (collection for Christian Aid) 11.30 pm Midnight Mass
Thurs 25th	Christmas Day – the Nativity of Our Lord 8.00 am Holy Eucharist with carols 10.30 am Holy Eucharist with carols
Fri 26th	St. Stephen, the first martyr 11.00 am Holy Eucharist
Sat 27th	St. John, Apostle and Evangelist 11.00 am Bilingual Eucharist
Sun 28th	First Sunday after Christmas Morning services at the usual times No Evening Prayer.



Mon 29th Holy Innocents'
 11.00 am Holy Eucharist
 Wed 31st Services at the usual times

January 2009

Thurs 1st Naming of Jesus (New Year's Day)
 11.00 am Holy Eucharist
 Fri 2nd & Services at the usual times
 Sat 3rd

Sun 4th Epiphany Sunday
 Services at the usual times.



Attendance Figures for October

	Total of Weekday Eucharists 1-4 October		25
Sunday 5th	8.00 am	Holy Eucharist	18
Trinity 20	10.30 am	Family Eucharist	89
Harvest Thanksgiving	5.00 pm	Evensong	9
	Total of Other Weekday Eucharists		31
Sunday 12th	8.00 am	Holy Eucharist	23
Trinity 21	10.30 am	Choral Matins	75
		Shortened Eucharist	26
	5.00 pm	Evensong	5
	6.00 pm	Exploring Worship	50
Saturday 18th	11.00 am	Bilingual Eucharist	9
St. Luke, Evangelist			
	Total of Other Weekday Eucharists		27
Sunday 19th	8.00 am	Holy Eucharist	27
Trinity 22	10.30 am	Sung Eucharist	85
	5.00 am	Evensong	10
	Total of Other Weekday Eucharists		35
Sunday 27th	8.00 pm	Holy Eucharist	14
Last Sunday after Trinity	10.30 am	Sung Eucharist	117
	5.00 pm	Evensong	10
Monday 28th	11.00 am	Holy Eucharist	4
SS Simon and Jude, Apostles			
	Total of Other Weekday Eucharists		21

Cytûn Conference on Climate Change

The Conference took place in Llandudno Town Hall on 12 November and the speaker was Sir John Houghton FRS CBE. The Town Hall was full for the meeting and Fr. John introduced Sir John as an eminent scientist who has held various important posts including professor in atmospheric physics at the University of Oxford and chief executive at the Met Office, who speaks from a Christian perspective and who is a founder member of the International Society for Science and Religion.

Sir John presented the evidence for global warming and described some of the effects which could be expected during the 21st century if little or no action is taken. He then discussed what is required to stabilise the climate at a sustainable level and suggested what should be our response as Christians.

I have summarised the main points from Sir John's presentation but if anyone would like to read about this in more detail, I have a copy of a very readable paper which Sir John made available at the meeting and you are welcome to borrow it.

How good is the evidence for global warming?

Assessment of the evidence for climate change been performed by the Intergovernmental Panel On Climate Change (IPCC) and Sir John was

chairman or cochairman of the IPCC's scientific assessment for 14 years. The assessment has involved thousands of scientists from many countries and the findings have been endorsed by the Academies of Science of the world's 11 most important countries. Despite the overwhelming scientific evidence for global warming as a result of man's activities, there are vested interest groups which have been running a misinformation campaign, suggesting that there is no need to take any action.

What are the facts?

Atmospheric temperature and carbon dioxide concentration have varied naturally over the last 160,000 years.

The global rise in temperature during the 20th century was well outside the range of known natural variability.

Since the beginning of the industrial revolution at about 1750, the concentration in the atmosphere of carbon dioxide (one of the most important "greenhouse gases") has risen by 40% and is now at a higher concentration in the atmosphere than it has been for millions of years. It has been shown that this is largely due to the burning of fossil fuels – coal, oil and gas.

What are the likely effects?

If no action is taken to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, the concentration

in the atmosphere will rise during the 21st century to two or three times its pre-industrial level, increasing global warming.

The global average temperature could rise by 2 to 6°C during the 21st century, depending upon what action is taken. These are large changes, occurring very rapidly and the rate of change will be difficult for human communities and ecosystems to adapt to.

A 2°C rise in global average temperature could result in 15 – 40 % of species facing extinction.

As the climate changes, dry regions are likely become drier but rainfall in wet areas could become more intense, while sea levels will rise.

Floods and droughts (which are on average the most devastating of the world's disasters) are likely to increase in frequency and intensity and the effects of these and rising sea levels could displace millions of people throughout the world.

What should be done?

Different governments or reviews have suggested different targets for reductions in carbon dioxide emissions. The following example indicates what could be required to reduce emissions sufficiently to stabilize the global average temperature at a “sustainable” 2°C or less above the preindustrial temperature.

2015 – there should be no further increase in global carbon dioxide emissions after this date, deforestation should be reduced and ‘carbon capture’ increased (e.g. by preventing carbon dioxide produced by coal-fired power stations from being released into the atmosphere).

2030 – deforestation should be halted by this time, 90 % of electricity should be produced from carbon-free sources and global energy use in buildings should be reduced by 50 %.

2050 – by this time global energy emissions would need to be less than 50 % of the 1990 levels and surface transport (cars, trains, ships, etc) would need to be more than 90 % carbon-free.

How can this be achieved?

A combination of increased energy efficiency and alternative energy sources is required, while a change from deforestation to reforestation is also necessary. Examples of increased efficiency are better insulation in buildings, increased mpg for cars and carbon capture in power stations. Important sources of carbon-free energy are solar, wind and nuclear power, while tidal or wave power should also be developed. Growing crops for fuel production needs to be managed carefully so that it does not compete with food production (or use more energy than it produces) but producing energy from agricultural waste could supply 10 % of the world's energy needs.

What should be the Christian response?

The developed countries are the greatest producers of carbon dioxide and have already benefited from 250 years of burning fossil fuels to grow their economies and thus have a moral imperative to help poor countries. Sir John urged that greater sharing of resources, knowledge and skills is required and in his paper cites some Biblical references to sharing (Luke 3 v1; Luke 12 v33; Acts 4 v32; 2 Cor 8 vv13-15). Individually, everybody can do something such as ensuring that our homes, appliances or cars are as energy efficient as possible, creating as little waste as possible and recycling more and Sir John illustrated this by quoting Edmund Burke, a British MP of 200 years ago, 'No one made a

greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do so little.'

Sir John ends his paper with the following words. "An unmistakable challenge is presented to the world wide Christian church to take on the God-given responsibility for caring for creation. It provides an unprecedented mission opportunity for Christians to take a lead and demonstrate love for God the world's creator and redeemer and love for our neighbours wherever they may be – remembering the words of Jesus, 'From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded' (Luke 12 v48)." (John Houghton, 2007, Global warming, climate change and sustainability, The John Ray Initiative Briefing Paper 14)

Christine Jones

The Holly and the Ivy

*The holly and the ivy,
When they are both full grown
Of all the trees that are in the wood
The holly bears the crown.*

This popular carol goes on to describe the characteristics of the holly but the ivy of the title does not get another mention unless the first verse is repeated at the end. However the implication is there that the ivy, like the holly, is a tree when it is "full grown".

For those familiar with only the climbing or trailing form of ivy (so useful for

Christmas flower arrangements!), it may be difficult to picture it as a tree in its own right. The climbing or trailing form is the juvenile, or vegetative, stage of development and ivy does not start to become tree-like until it reaches the mature, or reproductive stage. At the reproductive stage, the plant begins to branch in a more "bushy" fashion, the leaf shape changes from the typical ivy-leaf to a simpler shape of a pointed oval and the plant begins to flower.

The rounded heads ("umbels") of small green flowers appear about September

and are followed by small black fruits and the flowers provide a late season source of pollen and nectar for insects such as bumblebees.

The mechanism for the change from vegetative to reproductive growth is not fully understood but there are suggestions that the growing point of the plant needs to receive a certain amount of sunlight or to be a certain distance from the roots and the chemicals which they produce. Whatever the reason for the change, once ivy has reached the reproductive stage it can continue to develop into a bush or small tree, apparently independent of its original support, and cuttings taken from mature ivy will develop as mature plants.

Many trees change their structure as they mature, producing more numerous, shorter branches, while various herbaceous plants have quite different leaves on the vegetative plants and the flowering stems but ivy is the most extreme example of these difference amongst British native plants. Ivy is not unique in its change of form and New Zealand is particularly rich in trees with distinct juvenile and mature stages.

If you are fortunate enough to have some mature ivy in your garden, do tell the flower arrangers, as the bushy form, particularly with berries, can add its own beauty to those Christmas arrangements.

Christine Jones



Ivy (Hedera helix) at the reproductive stage, with oval leaves and umbels of developing flowers and fruits.

Great Hymns — Hark the Herald

The hymn for December is Charles Wesley's 'Hark! the herald angels sing'. Of all the Christmas hymns, it's arguably the greatest even though it has metamorphosed rather more than most.

In its original form, the hymn was written in ten four-line stanzas and published in *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, by John and Charles Wesley in 1739.

1. *Hark, how all the welkin rings,
 'Glory to the King of kings;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
 God and sinners reconcil'd!*
2. *Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
 Universal nature say,
 'Christ the Lord is born to-day!'*
3. *Christ, by highest Heaven ador'd,
 Christ, the everlasting Lord:
Late in time behold him come,
 Offspring of a virgin's womb!*
4. *Veil'd in flesh, the Godhead see,
 Hail th' incarnate Deity!
Pleas'd as man with men to appear,
 Jesus, our Immanuel here!*
5. *Hail, the heavenly Prince of Peace,
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
 Light and life to all he brings,
Risen with healing in his wings.*
6. *Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that man no more may die;
Born to raise the sons of earth;
Born to give them second birth.*

7. *Come, desire of nations, come,
 Fix in us thy humble home;
Rise, the woman's conquering seed,
 Bruise in us the serpent's head.*

8. *Now display thy saving power,
 Ruin'd nature now restore;
Now in mystic union join
Thine to ours, and ours to thine.*

9. *Adam's likeness, Lord, efface,
Stamp thy image in its place.
Second Adam from above,
Reinstate us in thy love.*

10. *Let us thee, though lost, regain,
Thee, the life, the inner man:
O, to all thyself impart,
Form'd in each believing heart.*

The word 'welkin' is archaic and may have been becoming into disuse when the hymn was published. The 'welkin' incorporates the sky and the vault of Heaven: 'the abode of the Deity' according to the Oxford English Dictionary. This is much in keeping with Luke's vision of the 'multitude of the heavenly host.'

Wesley was quite happy to appropriate words and ideas from popular secular culture. 'Love divine all loves excelling', for example, was based upon Dryden's very secular poem 'Fairest Isle all isles excelling'. In this instance, Wesley might have been influenced by William Somerville's 1759 poem *The Chase*: 'The Welkin rings, Men, Dogs, Hills, Rocks,

and Woods/ In the full Consort join.' Is this not the 'Universal Nature' referred to in stanza 2 line 4?

Collections of hymns were not published with tunes and it was very much up to individual churches and congregations to select a suitable tune. Whether or not Charles Wesley had a tune in mind is a matter of some debate but he did write several hymns for various festivals (Christmas Day, the Epiphany, Easter Day, Ascension Day and Whit Sunday) in 7.7.7.7 time. There are references to the hymn being sung to the tune *Easter Hymn* (but what about the Alleluias?) and others that the hymn was sung in a dignified fashion to a fairly sedate tune.

Although Wesley tinkered with the wording in 1743, the change of the first two lines to the first stanza was made by George Whitfield in his *Collection of Hymns for Social Worship* of 1753. Whitfield also omitted the last four stanzas. Whitfield's changes have survived but they altered the theology of the hymn somewhat. In the original, the welkin glories the King of Kings, ie God. In the later version, angels sing their praises to Jesus. This is poor theology as according to St. Luke, 'And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising **God**, and **saying**, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men"'

There is some real theological insight in the neglected verses. The Advent

antiphon 'Come, desire of nations, come,' is followed by a reference to the Fall, with the serpent bruising the heel of humanity and Adam bruising its head (Genesis 3:15). Wesley cleverly alters the meaning, asking that the serpent in us (sin) should be bruised (defeated) by Christ, the second Adam, who reinstates us as beloved sons and daughters of God. In the restoration of sinful humanity to a state of grace through the incarnation of Christ, the joining of divine and human nature is also achieved. Consequently, that which was lost (salvation) is gained and a new life is granted to all believers.

Changes to lines three and four of the original second stanza are from Martin Madan's *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns extracted from Various Authors* in 1760.

Charles Wesley was apparently furious that others had presumed to change his words to suit their own ends but it was left to his brother John to go to print. In the preface to the 1770 edition of *Hymns and Sacred Poems* he said, 'Many gentlemen have done my brother and me (though without naming us) the honour to reprint many of our Hymns. Now they are perfectly welcome to do so, provided they print them just as they are. But I desire they would not attempt to mend either the sense or the verse. Therefore, I must beg of them one of these two favours; either to let them stand just as they are, to take them for better or worse; or to add the true reading in the margin, or at the bottom

of the page; that we may no longer be accountable for the nonsense or for the doggerel of other men.'

The tune to which we now sing 'Hark! The herald' was written by Jewish Catholic convert Felix Mendelssohn in 1840. As one of the foremost composers of the 19th century, Mendelssohn needs little introduction. The tune was written as a chorus to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Gutenberg's printing press.

Mendelssohn believed the tune unsuitable for church use: 'If the right words are hit at, I am sure that the piece will be liked very much by the singers and the listeners, but it will never do to sacred works. There must be a national and merry subject found out,

something to which the soldierlike and buxom motion of the piece has some relation.'

In order to make the words fit the music, stanza pairs had to be joined and a two-line refrain added. The tune was thus adapted by WH Cummings, the organist of Waltham Abbey and the hymn with the tune was first published together in Richard R Chope's *Congregational Hymn and Tune Book* in 1857 and became firmly wedded in *Hymns Ancient and Modern* in 1861 which named the tune *Mendelssohn*.

Over the next 20 years, the hymn became so established that few mainstream hymnal editors have dared to alter it. The words 'welkin rings' were reintroduced in the 1904 edition of the

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No. 13. Hark! The Herald Angels sing.

Hark! the her-ald an-gels sing Glo-ry to the new-born King;

Peace on earth, and mer-cy mild, God and sinners rec-on-ciled!

- 2 Joyful all ye nations rise,
Join the triumphs of the skies:
With the angelic hosts proclaim
CHRIST is born in Bethlehem!
- 3 CHRIST, by highest heaven adored,
CHRIST, the everlasting LORD,
Late in time behold him come,
Offspring of the Virgin's womb!
- 4 Veil'd in flesh the GODHEAD see!
Hail th' Incarnate Deity,
Pleased, as man, with man to dwell:
JESUS, now EMMANUEL!
- 5 Risen with healing in His wings,
Light and life to all He brings:
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!

This page from an American Sunday school hymn book of the 1860s is typical of how the hymn was evolving out of control before the tune Mendelssohn and three eight line stanzas with refrain became the standard. In this example, the last five of the original ten stanzas have been dropped and the lines in the fifth stanza have been completely reversed, presumably to conclude with a more dramatic effect.

A&M and caused an outcry. *The English Hymnal* of 1906 had it both ways by printing the three-stanza modern version (with an additional stanza formed from the original seventh and eight stanzas, asterisked) and the original version set to the tune *Dent Dale*, based upon the Scottish song *Tarry Woo*'. Ralph Vaughan Williams arranged the tune for the *EH* but whether it was used earlier in this context I have been unable to ascertain.

Over the years, there have been numerous versions of this hymn printed. Some have switched lines in the stanzas; others have set the original or revised words to long-lost or obscure tunes too numerous to mention. Wesleyan purists still sing the original words, either to *Mendelssohn* with the last two lines of each (even) stanza repeated, *Dent Dale*, or specially-written modern compositions.

Mendelssohn of course gets a great deal of attention with various arrangements and descants, notably those by Sir David Willcocks, first performed by the choir of King's College, Cambridge.

So it is with considerable irony that one of our greatest hymns, with words attributed to one of our greatest hymn-writers, who would probably describe them as part-doggerel and in any event, required them to be sung solemnly, is gloriously set to a rousing tune considered by its composer as being unsuitable for sacred use.

The following three stanzas are as the

hymn normally appears today:

*1. Hark, the herald-angels sing
Glory to the new-born King,
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim,
'Christ is born in Bethlehem.'*

***Hark, the herald-angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.***

*2. Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come,
Offspring of a Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see:
Hail, the incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.*

*3. Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace:
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness.
Light and life to all he brings,
Risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.*



Charles Wesley and Felix Mendelssohn.