

## REALITY GAP

Dear Friends,

Has anyone enjoyed watching The Chosen yet? I have to say that Trish and I are really looking forward to the new season. I liked the way that the producer of the series, which is all about Jesus and his disciples in case you didn't know, wanted to root the scriptures in the real lives of people that are part of them. The idea of going beyond the stained-glass windows and illustrated Bible pictures to create an insight, still rooted in the Bible and historical research, of the lives of the people Jesus called to follow him, helps bring them to life. It is so easy for there to be a "reality gap" and to see them as a different sort of human being to us, complete with halos - not really real people at all. But of course, they were. They are.

thought to a different future, the impact of that decision to say "yes" to God is more amazing than if she were someone specially prepared for such a decision.

When we think of Joseph having worked so hard at his business to get to the place where he could support a family and then to be asked not only trust his pregnant fiancée hasn't been unfaithful but that he would have to leave that all behind and go who knows where to do who knows what... his decision is simply incredible.

Not to mention the elderly couple who had given up years ago trying to have a family and now find themselves in their later years with a miraculous pregnancy with John... again, the more we can see



It's quite easy to fall into the same trap with the accounts of Jesus' birth that we have too. Christmas cards can be so unhelpful in this regard. The wonder of God coming among us is actually made more wonderful when we grasp that he did so through the lives of ordinary people who found themselves in extraordinary times!

When we think of Mary as the young woman going about her life in her village, planning to be married soon and to continue the pattern of living that her mother and hers before her had lived without any

them as ordinary people called to make extraordinary decisions, the more the reality of their circumstances and the impact their experiences must have had becomes clearer.

The personal nature of God's intervention in the lives of these ordinary people that begins the world changing events of the life of Jesus is part of the pattern we receive through the Bible and through the ages of how God works in our world. While kings (presidents and politicians) battle out

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their reigns, ordinary people with God at work in their lives do extraordinary things - most often unnoticed... until later.

It may be our first response to worry for the UK when we see statistics, such as the 2021 census, that seem to point to an institutional, even systemic decline in those professing to be Christian. And it is a worry that the decline in the influence of Christian values can be seen to be paying its toll on the life of the nation. But the real story, as it always has been, is told through the individual lives of ordinary people who follow their call to be Jesus' people in the communities in which they live. A single statistic never paints the real picture. All the churches I have ever been part of have been characterised by a desire to express their faith in hope and goodness in the communities they serve. Of course, to give and keep on giving is no easy thing - especially when faced with indifference. But it is because God is part of our lives, day in and day out, and because He gives and keeps on giving that we have the drive to do the same. Never tire of doing what is good, St Paul encourages us.

It's also really important to remember that the UK has made some... interesting decisions recently! (I'll let you fill in the specifics about what interesting means!) Globally, the Christian faith is growing... by about 30 million this year to around 2.56 billion people! (Click [here](#) for the source). It's also an interesting observation that in 1900, 95% of

Christians lived in a Christian country... that figure is now closer to 50% meaning that we are being called to live out our calling and our faith among those who do not yet know how wonderful it is to live in the grace and love of Jesus. So, Jesus' followers are becoming more dispersed... maybe to where we need to be? In a dynamic and changing world, the Spirit is always at work!

So, as we continue through Advent toward our Christmas celebrations, let's do so with an increased sense of *who* we are called to be for God *wherever* we are called to be. Jesus intervenes in our ordinary lives in extraordinary ways to help us to be part of his invitation to a life lived under his amazing grace. His truth that we are loved and blessed by God; that the power of prayer and His presence transforms lives and situations - bringing real strength, peace and hope to real people - remains a constant in a changing world. We have the benefit of each other, our church families and communities to encourage each other in living out our callings as his followers; we have the benefit of nearly two thousand years of experience of seeing Jesus at work and to see the Holy Spirit moving. So, let's continue to pray for the renewal of the UK and all nations and let's be encouraged that with Jesus our lives can be ordinarily extraordinary!!

With every blessing,

Jules.



**LIVE**  
**REAL**

- **who we are called to be for God**  
- **wherever we are called to be**





# Angels, Prophets and Kings

A modern Christmas oratorio

Singers, actors and music take us on a journey of hope  
celebrating the Christmas story.

**Thur. 15th & Fri. 16th December, 7pm**  
**at The Lighthouse, Kontokali**

Tickets €15 including meze and a glass of wine  
*available at Holy Trinity Church & [violettateetor@protonmail.com](mailto:violettateetor@protonmail.com)*  
*Violetta -6907658935 & F.B.messenger - Holy Trinity Church Corfu*  
Doors open at 5:30 pm with Christmas Gifts & Crafts for sale



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# PULSE PRAYERS



As we head towards that very special day, the birth of our Saviour, hear our favourite carols, wrap gifts for our loved ones and prepare for family time together let us draw closer to God in prayer. Prayer is not for God's benefit, it is for ours. Our prayers work not because of how well we say them but because of how well He hears them. (The Prayer Course on a Wednesday evening is still ongoing. Join Jules to help improve your prayer life.)

**'He will call upon Me and I will answer him'** *Psalm 91:15.*

Lord we thank you for all the blessings you have bestowed on us and lift to you at the forefront of our hearts:

-The miserable state we have made of your precious creation. Help leaders to accept that climate change is here and the devastating impact on children's lives and future generations. Place on leaders' hearts the needs of the most vulnerable and make progress for a workable solution. Guide us too, that your love might be reflected in our care for the planet.

**'The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.'** *Genesis 2:15*

-An end to war. Lord, as the wars around the world continue over boundaries, values, differences, guide leaders to think beyond their own desire for power and authority and to show them that protecting their citizens' wellbeing is their greatest achievement. We pray for all who are called to be mediators to settle disputes, Lord guide and bless them.

**'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.'** *Matthew 5:9*

- For those acting to aid those in need , suffering in war torn countries , refugees ,the hungry, traumatized, oppressed and underprivileged. And think especially of Pavla, fund raising for Sabina in Yemen, Emily's work with women of UK and Uganda , Mathew and Cindy, and the Hellenic Red Cross in Corfu.

**'May God equip them with everything good for doing his will'** *Hebrews 13:21*

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-The bigotry and prejudice in this world. We are one body, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Break down barriers that divide us, change hearts and minds to take away hatred, fear and anger and unite us Lord in Your truth and love.

**'For God shows no partiality'** *Romans 2:11*

-Protection for our children. Lord in this ever-increasing cruel world, we ask for protection on children from evil perpetrators guised as trustworthy and honest people. Guide authorities to uncover any atrocities on the innocent young and bring them to justice. Heal those children who have been mentally and physically scarred that they may lead a full and loving life.

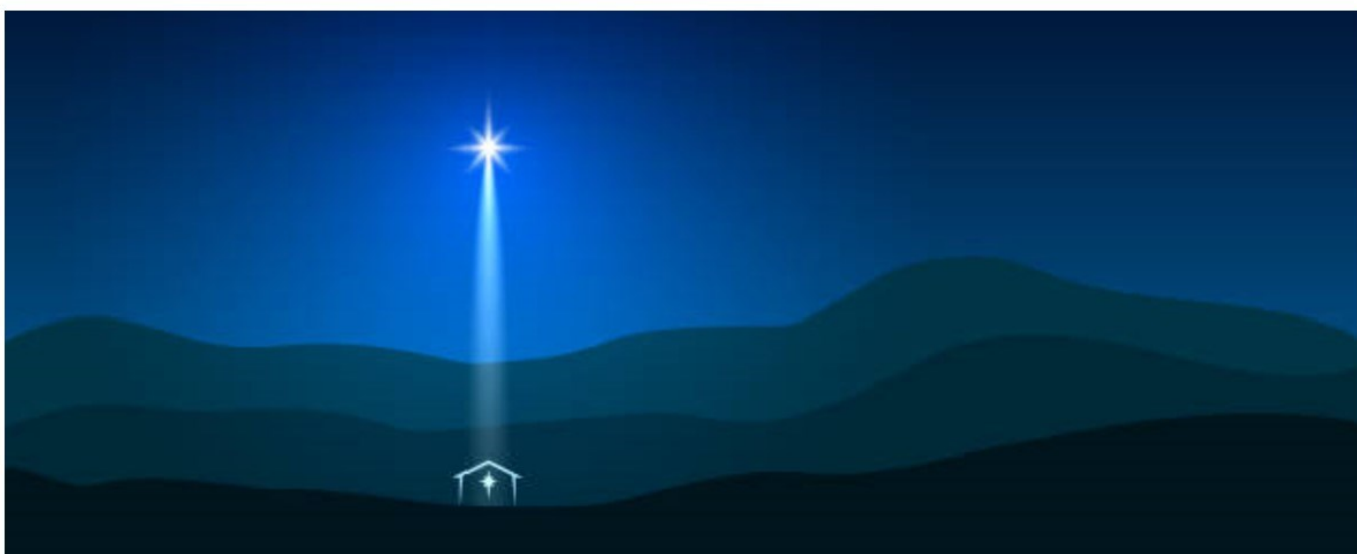
**'Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.'** *Ephesians 5:11*

-HTC's vision for the future. As refurbishment work continues at HTC, we pray that Logos Café will bring the local community and visitors into HTC and be filled with your Spirit and have a desire to learn more about You. We also pray for Christmas services and events; the traditional 'Carols by Candlelight' services at HTC and Messonghi chapel, Kassiopi Carols at Taverna Lekas and the special oratorio, 'Angels, Prophets and Kings' at The Lighthouse. Lord we ask you to bless this special event and we give thanks to all those involved.

**When the Angel appeared to Mary she said 'I am the Lord's servant. May your word to me be fulfilled.'** *Luke 1:38.*

*Make that your prayer this Christmas.*





# Christmas at HTC

Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup>	7:30	Angels, Prophets and Kings, The Lighthouse
Friday 16 <sup>th</sup>	7:30	Angels, Prophets and Kings, The Lighthouse
Monday 19 <sup>th</sup>	7:30	Carol Singing, St Spyridon Square
Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup>	8:00	Carol Singing, outside the Old Town Hall
Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	7:00	Kassiopi Carols at Lekas Taverna
Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	6:00	Carols at Messonghi Chapel
Christmas Eve	6:00	Carols by Candlelight at HTC
Christmas Morn	9:30	Christmas Day Worship at HTC



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# The Adventures of Mrs Mop, back in Albania



On Friday 4<sup>th</sup> November when I went to get my ticket for the “Flying Dolphin” to Sarande, the travel agencies were competing, so I got a ticket for just 15€ instead of the normal price of 19€. Arriving in Sarande at 8:30am Maria met me at the port and we caught the bus to Ksamil where her son Genti was waiting. The weather wasn't so bad, but we were so busy chatting away that it was dark before we knew it and so we didn't go for our usual walk up to the point that overlooks St. Stephanos Bay in Corfu. The next day was stormy, but never mind we had lots to talk about not having seen each other in three years apart from a 1½ hour surprise pop in earlier in the year. It always touches me to see how people with little give so much in hospitality. Maria fed me up and made a wonderful Albanian meat pie.



So, we had a good time of friendship and fellowship and Maria read in Albanian the prayers in Ephesians chapter 1 and 3 which were so appropriate to what we had been talking about. She's been through more bereavement and is still grieving. When people ask how she stays so strong with all that's happened, she replies that God is bigger than her problems. Waiting for the bus back to Sarande on Sunday morning we discovered that they ran on a different schedule, which meant I would miss

the boat back. There was also a lovely Australian couple waiting, so we shared a taxi together.



Though it was too late to catch any of the Sunday services I walked up to the church where Richard served which was on the ground floor of an apartment, to discover that it had now become a private house. Next door I noticed a cross on the wall and thought to myself that they must have moved there. Anyway, it turned out that it was a Grace Baptist church. The Pastor Aaron and wife Candi and his family were just leaving but kindly welcomed me in. Another “Wilson family” from America with seven children!

He kindly drew directions to where the church had moved to and gave me a few booklets of John's Gospel and Romans written side by side in both Albanian and English. He also gave me the church card and I gave him one of HTC. So, that was the way this trip rounded off and I now have a little supply of something to give away for next time!

It was Maria that introduced me to her sister and family in 2006 who were in great need, and we at HTC were able to help by sending food and clothes and buying them a fridge. For which they are forever grateful for the love shown. That was sixteen years ago. And wow,

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God answered our prayers in wonderful ways by both provision of a decent house, and fellowship with other believers.

As always greetings come from Maria who asked about the church, so I was able to tell her how excited we are about Café Logos.

"I keep asking that the that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation so that you may know him better." *Ephesians 3:17*



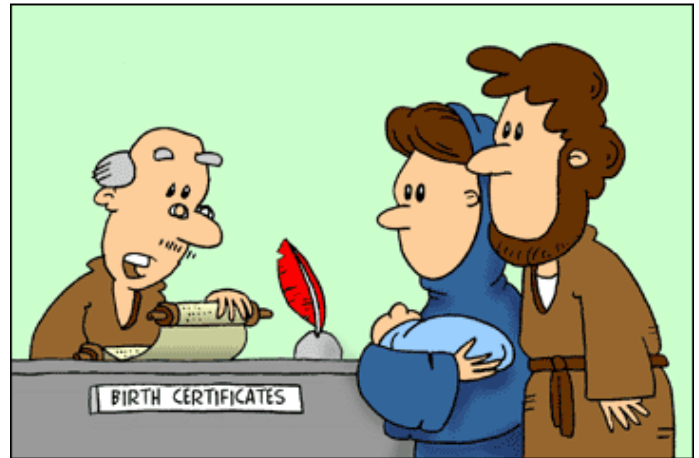
## Cartoons (with thanks to Reverendfun.com)



Thanks to Mikel Rice (See Luke 2:1-16)

12-18-2000

I'M SO SICK OF BEING A SHEPHERD ...  
NOTHING EXCITING EVER HAPPENS OUT  
HERE



Thanks to Dad Hengeveld (See Luke 2:1-16)

12-20-2000

'JESUS, WONDERFUL COUNSELOR, MIGHTY  
GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER, PRINCE OF  
PEACE' IS A BIT LONG FOR THIS FORM  
... YOU MIGHT WANT TO JUST USE  
'JESUS'



## WHAT'S ON at HTC

Keep up to date with what's on at Holy Trinity Corfu by visiting our website calendar.

<http://holytrinitycorfu.bravesites.com/whats-on>

OR



## Links



<https://europe.anglican.org/prayer-diary/prayer-diary>



<https://www.ics-uk.org/Pages/Category/prayer-diary>

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<http://www.theagiot.com/>



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*We are happy to accept prayer requests for inclusion in Pulse or in the morning service. If you are requesting prayer for someone other than yourself please make sure you have their permission to be mentioned publicly.*

*Please remember the submission **deadline for PULSE is 25th of each month**. Articles, news, information etc. received after this time may not be included and will be carried over to the next edition if appropriate. Thank you.*

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