

Officers of West Wickham New Church

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For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.

Luke 2:11,12

GLORY
TO
GOD
IN THE
HIGHEST!

May all those who are willing to receive the Lord into their hearts and minds this Christmas be blessed with his love, joy and peace.

THE WEATHERVANE

Newsletter of the New Church Centre
West Wickham

Love came down at Christmas

Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, Love Divine,
Love was born at Christmas,
Star and Angels gave the sign.



Worship we the Godhead,
Love Incarnate, Love Divine,
Worship we our Jesus,
But wherewith for sacred sign?

Love shall be our token,
Love be yours and love be mine,
Love to God and all men,
Love for plea and gift and sign.

Christina Rossetti



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Love came down at Christmas

In the Old Testament God comes across as far off and unknowable. Indeed Exodus chapter 33 verse 20 tells us that the Lord said to Moses: *“you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live.”* Jesus picked up the same theme and when referring to the ‘Father’ also showed that the Father was far off and unknowable. This is reflected particularly in John chapter 5 verse 37 when Jesus says of the Father: *“His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen”*

Thus the Word tells us that the very being of God, the ‘Father’ is unknowable.

If you can, stop for a moment, pick up a pen and some paper and write what you think and feel love is, starting with the words ‘Love is’

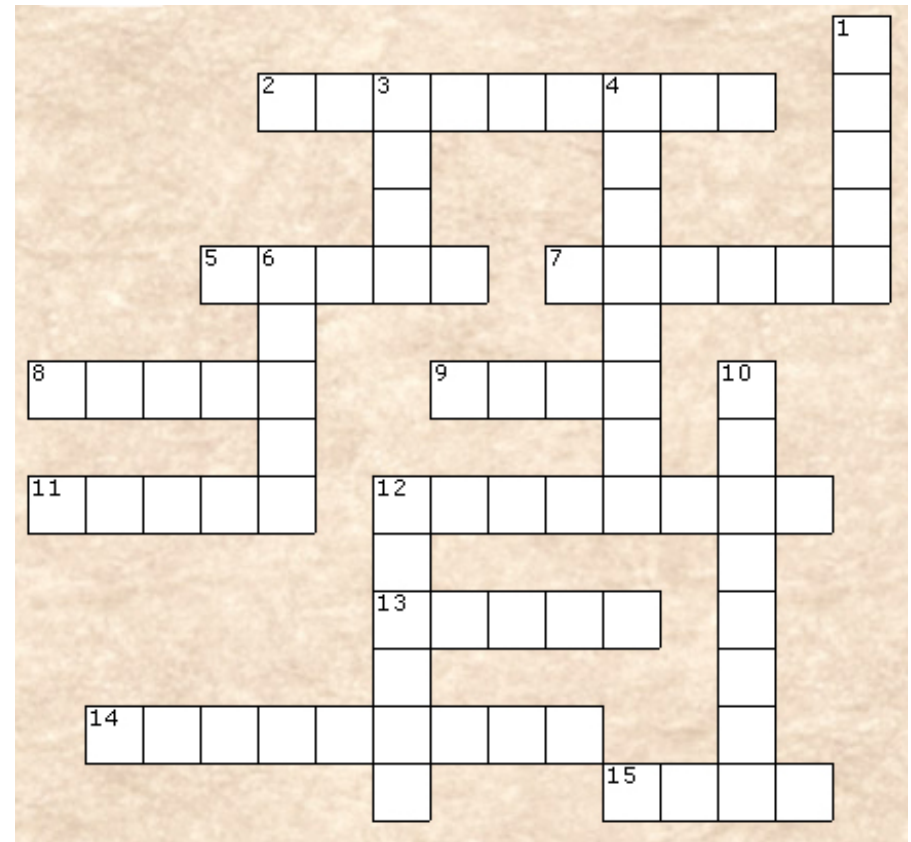
I am sure that most people responding to this request would write ‘Love is’ followed by an action word, perhaps giving, caring, being good, being together, sharing, expecting nothing in return, wishing joy to others and much, much more.

Although it seems that love in itself is unknowable and cannot be understood we can know and experience love when it takes on form and is active in our daily living. We can perhaps then see that the very being of God or the ‘Father’ is like Love itself – indeed the very being of God is Love itself. Neither can be understood or known unless they take form and are active in our world.

God itself or Love itself came into our world in Jesus Christ so that we could know God and know Love *“If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”* [John 14:7]

The Love that is the very being of God is unconditional – it is freely shared and demands nothing in return. Although it has to be said that what we receive of that unconditional love very much depends on our openness to it and our willingness to share it.

Crossword Carols



Across

2 God rest ye _ 5 What _ is this? 7 Hark the herald _
 8 Ave _ 9 Good _ Wenceslas 11 Joy to the _
 12 Go tell it on the _ 13 Silent _ 14 O little town of _
 15 O _ night

Down

1 We three _ 3 The first _ 4 It came upon a _ clear
 6 Angels we have _ on high
 10 O come all ye _ 12 Away in a _

Joyce and Jeffrey Shepherd who feature in the 'Happy Anniversary' message below will be known to quite a few of our newsletter readers. Around 12 years ago or so the churches at West Wickham, Kensington and Greenhill shared a very successful joint weekend at Purley Chase and Joyce and Jeffrey were there too. During the Holy Supper service on the Sunday Jeffrey played the piano and introduced us to a lovely communion hymn - 'This is my body' which has these words for its first verse.

*This is my body, broken for you,
bringing you wholeness, making you free.
Take it and eat it, and when you do,
do it in love for me.*

We continue to use this hymn at West Wickham.



Happy Anniversary

Congratulations to Joyce and Jeffrey Shepherd on their Platinum Wedding Anniversary

They married in the Burnley New Church on December 5th 1953. They eventually set up home in Letchworth. They would go to the Finchley New Church quite often and became very involved with the Greenhill New Church up until its closure a few years ago.

In living this Love perfectly in the world Jesus united himself with the Father within and with his death and resurrection completed the circle of Love. Our role in life is to follow this example, albeit in a finite way, and seek to unite ourselves with the Love that is the source of our life.

Alan

True Christianity 89 - extracts

In the process of taking on a human manifestation, God followed his own divine design. Now, because God came down, and because he is the design, there was no other way for him to become an actual human being than to be conceived, to be carried in the womb, to be born, to be brought up, and to acquire more and more knowledge so as to become intelligent and wise. Therefore in his human manifestation he was an infant like any infant, a child like any child, and so on with just one difference: he completed the process more quickly, more fully, and more perfectly than the rest of us do.

The Lord's life followed this path because the divine design is for people to prepare themselves to accept God; and as they prepare themselves, God enters them as if he were coming into his own dwelling and his own home. The preparation entails developing a concept of God and of the spiritual things related to the church - that is, developing intelligence and wisdom.

It is a law of the divine design that the closer and closer we come to God, which is something we have to do as if we were completely on our own, the closer and closer God comes to us. When we meet, God forms a partnership with us. The Lord followed this design even to the point of union with his Father.

Calendar for December

Sun	3	11.00	Worship for the first Sunday in Advent led by Alan Misson on the theme <i>'Elizabeth and Mary'</i>
Sun	10	11.00	Worship led by David Brooks
Sun	17	11.00	Christmas Carol Service led by Rev Helen Brown followed by coffee and mince pies
Sun	24		No Service
Mon	25		Christmas Day - No Service
Sun	31		No Service

Calendar for January

Sun	7	11.00	Worship led by Alan Misson on the theme <i>'Herod and the Wise Men'</i>
Sun	14		No Service
Sun	21	11.00	Worship led by Alan Misson on the theme <i>'Isaiah's Mission'</i> with the Sacrament of the Holy Supper
Sun	28		No Service

Advanced Notice for February

Sun	4	11.00	Worship led by Alan Misson on the theme <i>'A Spiritual Compass'</i>
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Looking Back

In the last issue of Weathervane it was reported that Colin Skinner had reached the point when preparations were being made for him to start peritoneal dialysis before the end of the year. Unfortunately during October he took a turn for the worse, so much so that he lost 20% of his weight! Fortunately at the beginning of November he started emergency dialysis in hospital for 3 days a week. This has proved extremely beneficial and he is now eating well and putting weight back on and feeling amazingly improved. He now hopes to make an appearance back at church in early December and will also make the transition to home dialysis.



Looking Forward

As you will notice from the details of services on page 4 we have agreed to have a reduced number of services during the winter months of December and January. As a result we have three services in December leading up to Christmas and two in January. It is possible that we might also have a reduced number of services in February but no decision on this has yet been made.

