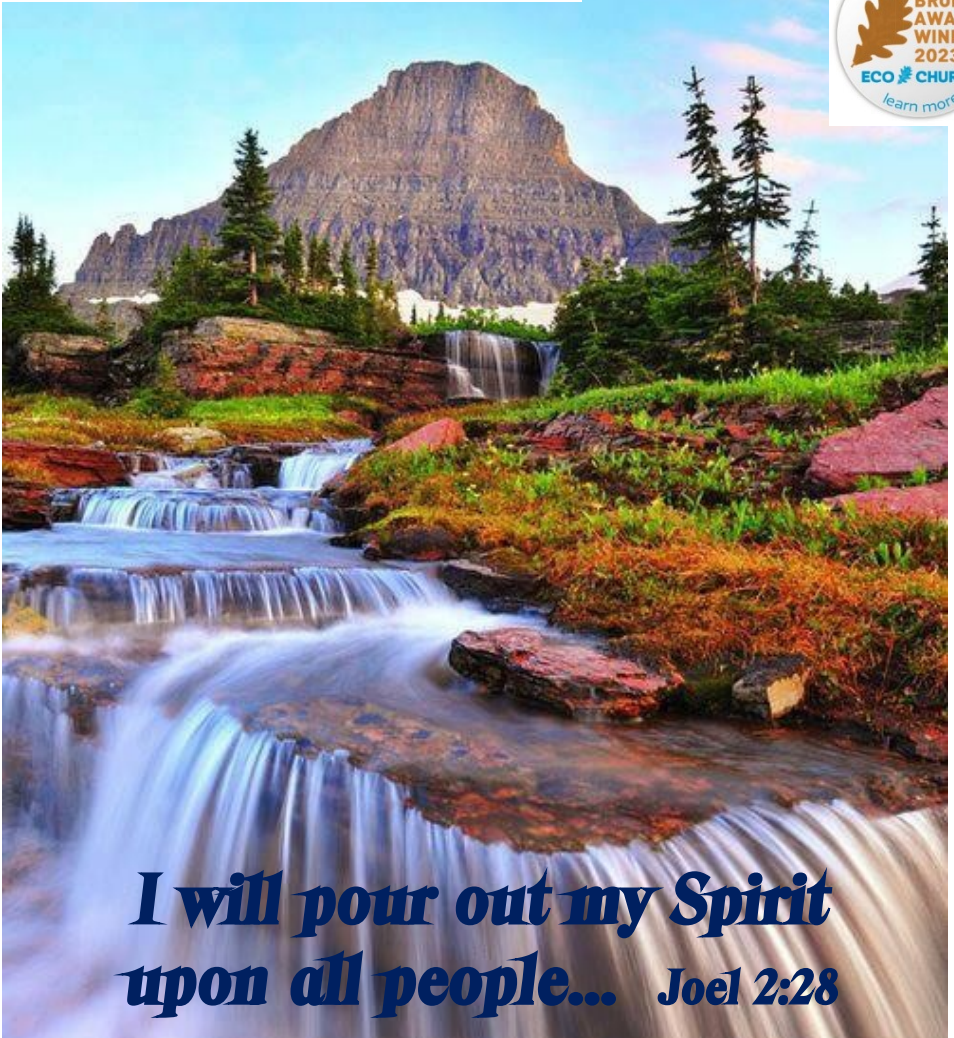


# focus



Furrough Cross  
United Reformed Church

February/March 2025



*I will pour out my Spirit  
upon all people... Joel 2:28*

**Website:** [furroughcross.org](http://furroughcross.org)

**Find us on Facebook:** [furroughcross](https://www.facebook.com/furroughcross)

**Minister: Rev. Heather Cadoux** (01803) 310156

e-mail: [revheathercadoux@gmail.com](mailto:revheathercadoux@gmail.com)

**Church Secretary:** Vacant

**Church Treasurer:** Mrs Jenny Marshall

**Hall Steward:** Mrs Ann Close (for hall bookings only)  
(01803) 324080

**Messy Church Leader:** Miss Shirley Leaman

## **REGULAR CHURCH ACTIVITIES**

**Sunday Services and Junior Church:** Sundays at 10.30 am.  
Communion on 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month.

**Midweek Worship:** Wednesdays at 2.30 pm.

**Messy Church:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of each month (not August) 4 to 6 pm.

**Friday Coffee:** Every Friday 10.00 - 12.00.

**First Friday Film:** 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of each month 2.00pm (not Jun-Aug)

**Bereavement and Friendship Group:** 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month,  
10.30 am - 12.00 pm.

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Opinions and views expressed in this magazine may be personal and not necessarily accord with those of the Minister and Elders of Furrough Cross United Reformed Church. Care is taken over the accuracy of the information presented but the Church and Elders cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions. The Editor reserves the right to edit or omit material submitted.

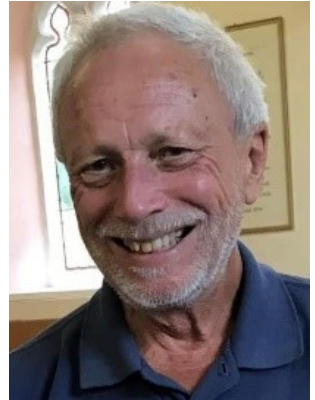
## EDITORIAL

*Roy Cadoux*

It's an exciting time for us, as we begin to make plans for life in a new location from July, a new home, and hopefully new friends. And on 22<sup>nd</sup> January our daughter Sarah and her husband Chris provided us with our third grandson (their first child). Edward Isambard was ten days late (his dad



does work for South Western Railway!) and weighed in at 8lb 6oz.



At the other end of the scale, in March I will be moving on from Trombones (76) to Sunset Strip (77). For my peace of mind I recently organised for myself a 'Mature Driver Review' with the Institute of Advanced Motorists. I had an hour's drive with a lovely local volunteer assessor, during which he

offered some helpful advice on my driving techniques and pointed out a few 'bad' habits I had picked up over the last 60 years (am I really that old?!) The final assessment, by the way, was 'Competent', though not the top grade 'Excellent'.

There's no such thing as an Institute of Advanced Christians, but I wonder if I, and quite a few of us, might benefit from a 'Mature Believer Review'? Have we got lazy or careless in our lives of faith? Have we forgotten to be considerate to our fellow travellers? How are our skills at navigating through the Bible? Do we keep a good look out all around (for people in need of our help)? Would God give us even a 'Competent' rating? If so, can we strive to be more like 'Excellent'?

And it's a challenging time for the church, as Elders and Church Meeting begin to think about how the future might look. I would hope that we will all pray for the ongoing work at Furrough Cross, and consider carefully if there might be new ways in which each of us could get involved.

Dear Friends,

Seasons come around and in the manse front garden I've noticed that the snowdrops and daffodils are beginning to push their way through the earth. Signs of spring are on their way. And it's a sign that the Christian year is moving its way from Christmas to Lent and Easter.



This year Lent begins on 5<sup>th</sup> March, and I've been reflecting on Jesus' time in the wilderness. The word wilderness conjures up the idea of a very inhospitable place. In the Bible there are many instances of people in the wilderness. Perhaps the most well known is the 40 years that Moses and the people of Israel spent there in need of food and water, which God provided time after time when there was a need. It was to the wilderness that Elijah ran after the battle with the priests of Baal, although God had triumphed. Elijah was afraid of what King Ahab or his wife Jezebel would do. It was to the wilderness Hagar fled with her son Ishmael, fearing for their lives because Sarah saw her and her son as a threat to her son Isaac.

Yet it was in the wilderness that Moses, Elijah and Hagar encountered God. There they each met with God. Moses received the Ten Commandments – the way of life for the people of God. Elijah was renewed and heard the still small voice of God. Hagar received a promise for her son and went back to her master and mistress.

There are times when each of us for a time find ourselves in the wilderness. Circumstances in our lives not quite are what we expected. Or perhaps there's that time in between one thing and another. It's a time to pause, to spend time reflecting on what has been and what might

be. A time to rest, a time to be renewed, a time to dream dreams and look to the future.

Sometimes our wilderness is not an easy place to be. There are times when the challenges of life just seem to overwhelm. I read something recently that said “Peace is not an absence of troubles but the very presence of Christ in those troubles.” It’s something I’ve seen time and time again as well as experienced myself even in the midst of challenges – I’ve known peace because I know that Jesus is at my side.



*The latest picture of our Sarah and Teddy*

As you know I will be retiring at the end of June. There is both a joy and a sadness. Joy as I’m looking forward to spending more time with Roy, our children and grandchildren, as well as rediscovering activities that have taken a back seat since I’ve been ordained. There will be a sadness too. I will miss the relationships I have with both you and the community around Furrough Cross.

I know that this time of transition may well feel like Furrough Cross is in the wilderness too. It is an opportunity for the church to reassess its mission. You won’t be on your own as Synod will be there to help and guide. There will offer support from the Synod office team, the Synod pastoral advisor for the area and I suspect an interim moderator will be

appointed to help you through the vacancy process as the church seeks the will of God for Furrough Cross.

Before Roy and I retire to Plymouth there will be much we want to do together in preparation for the next stage in the life of Furrough Cross URC. My prayer is that the next few months will bring us opportunities to prepare and grow in our relationship and service to God.

All my love

Heather



## Elders Election

Members are invited to nominate their fellow church members for the elders election to be held at the church AGM on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2025. There is no need to ask permission as this will be done by either the minister or an elder. Those nominated who receive at least 4 nominations will be invited to consider whether or not they can take on the role of elder and serve the church in this way.

The church meeting will then vote at the AGM for those who allow their names to go forward. Furrough Cross URC's constitution allows for a maximum of 12 elders.



## LET THERE BE LIGHT

We have taken another step along our Eco Church journey by replacing the fluorescent tubes in the church with low energy LED strips. As well as helping with our energy bills, the lights are noticeably brighter and the



fittings look very neat and tidy. Many thanks to Bill for coordinating the installation work.

## CHURCH HEATING

Can you set the timer for your central heating at home? If so, you are qualified to set the times for the heating in the church. We urgently need to find someone to work alongside Roy for the rest of this winter, with a view to taking over for next winter. Please talk to Roy if you might be able to do this.

## SPRING CLEANING

Val Elms

Many of us are looking forward to longer and milder spring days ... and it won't be long now. God gave us a wonderful part of the country to live in. So let's go outside whenever we can ... and not worry about 'Spring Cleaning'! I hope you enjoy this poem.



### *DUST*

Dust if you must, but wouldn't it be better

To paint a picture, or write a letter?

Bake a cake or plant a seed?

Ponder the difference between want and need?

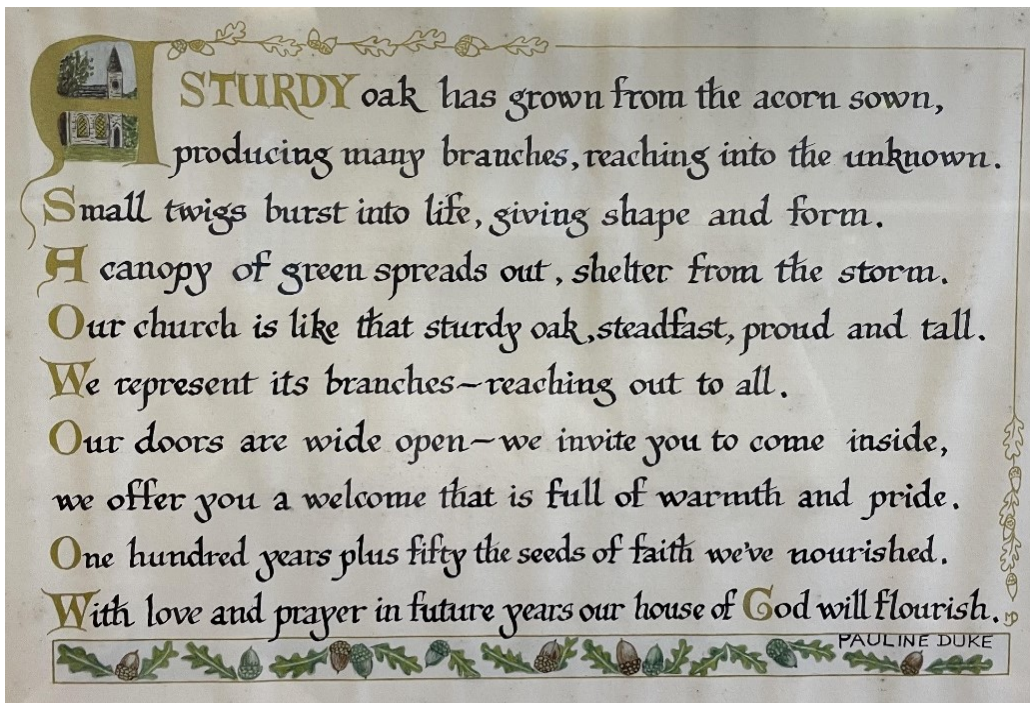
Dust if you must, but there isn't much time  
With rivers to swim and mountains to climb,  
Music to hear and books to read,  
Friends to cherish and life to lead.

Dust if you must but the world's out there,  
With the sun on your face, the wind in your hair,  
A flutter of snow, a shower of rain:  
This day will not come round again.

Dust if you must, but bear in mind,  
Old age will come and it's not always kind.  
And when you go - and go you must ...  
You, yourself, will make more dust!

*Anon*

**Pauline Duke** wrote this poem in 2002 for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our church (which became Furrough Cross URC from the union of Abbey Road and Babbacombe URCs). You can see it on the wall of the church.



## **MAGAZINE DONATIONS FOR 2025**

There should be an envelope attached to this copy of the magazine. We hope that you will be able to contribute £6 which should cover the production costs for all issues in 2025. If you normally receive the magazine by post, the total cost to the church is over £10 per year. Please place the envelope (marked with your name) in the normal offertory plate. Receiving the magazine by email continue to be free (and has the advantage of better quality pictures), but donations are always welcome if you enjoy having the magazine!

## **COFFEE MORNINGS**

Could you help on Friday mornings with hosting and serving coffee, maybe once a month? Please see Roy if you might be interested.



*WALK WITH GOD*

There are many ups and downs in life  
 Maybe for joy or sorrow.  
 There are many unknown paths to  
 choose  
 In hope for a bright tomorrow.  
 So keep on walking in the light,  
 Someone's there beside you;  
 And when life's journey gets too  
 rough  
 He'll be there to guide you.

*PEACE*

When we find peace within  
 our hearts  
 It's a very precious thing!  
 Hold onto it and cherish it,  
 For it's a very lovely thing!  
 It can't be bought with  
 money, or given as a gift;  
 But it's there to share with  
 others,  
 It's the calm we feel within.

**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

- Fri 7<sup>th</sup> Feb** 2.00pm First Friday Film: *The Greatest Showman*
- Fri 14<sup>th</sup> Feb** 3.45pm Messy Church
- Mon 17<sup>th</sup> Feb** 6.30am Ecumenical Prayer Gathering, in our church
- Thur 27<sup>th</sup> Feb** 10.30am Bereavement Drop-In
- Sat 1<sup>st</sup> March** 8.00am Christians Together in Torquay Prayer Breakfast  
 at the Church of the Assumption, Abbey Road.
- Fri 7<sup>th</sup> March** 2.00pm First Friday Film
- Fri 14<sup>th</sup> March** 3.45pm Messy Church
- Sun 23<sup>rd</sup> March** 11.45 Church Meeting (including election of Elders)
- Fri 4<sup>th</sup> April** 2.00pm First Friday Film
- Thur 17<sup>th</sup> April** Maundy Thursday supper and communion (time  
 to be confirmed)
- Fri 18<sup>th</sup> April** Good Friday
- Sun 20<sup>th</sup> April** 10.30am Easter Sunday



**Furrough Cross Preschool Nativity**

*Torbay Weekly*



## **ECO** **CHURCH** AN A ROCHA UK PROJECT

When Jonathan Oliverio led our worship in January he told us a little about his work with bicycle renovation and cycling lessons.

Encouraging the use of safe pedal power is such a valuable contribution to making Torbay a little greener!

We also very much appreciated Jonathan's talent at the piano (another environmentally friendly device!)

*Jonathan arrives at church from Paignton by bike. Just as well our other visiting preachers don't try to bring their cars inside!*



*Shirley Leaman*

We had a great Jesus-filled **Christmas Messy Church**, with the church echoing to the sound of laughter, stories, prayer and song. The air was wreathed with the smells of cooking of sausage rolls, pigs in blankets and pizzas. We welcomed the children with Christmas puzzles and games, quickly followed by a video called “He chose the shepherds”. God didn’t choose the rich and important people to be the first ones to see His Son. It was the poor shepherds caring for their sheep on the frosty hillsides of Bethlehem who were told the glorious news by the angels.

We talked about how it would be if no one remembered when it was your birthday and how sad you would feel. And often this happens - people forget that Jesus was born at Christmas and was sent by God to earth to show us the right way to live.

We did so many things to remind us of the Christmas story. The children drew pictures on stones of the nativity, which they could keep or hide somewhere for someone else to find. They made beautiful shell angels, chocolate mangers with a jelly-baby baby, helped create a big picture of the Christmas story, made decorations to hang on their Christmas trees and, the most popular of all the crafts, made edible donkey dung!

During worship time the Rev Val Price told us all about the grumpy innkeeper who had to keep answering the door to a succession of people who wanted to see the new Baby born in his stable. Eventually even the innkeeper was pleased to welcome the new baby into the world, little realising who He was. After this everyone sang “Away in a Manger” and then down through the church came Mary riding on a donkey, accompanied by Joseph, some angels, a shepherd, and some wise men. And in the manger was a real live baby (thank you baby Ophelia) which Mary was able to rock and show to everyone.

To end our worship time all the children were given a Christingle orange, where the candle was lit to symbolise Jesus as the light of the world. The church looked beautiful when the lights were turned off and just the Christingles sparkled in the darkness.

Our afternoon ended with a delicious Christmas buffet - sandwiches, crisps, pizzas, salads, sausage rolls, cold chicken and jelly. What a feast it was organised by our marvellous catering team, led by Agnes. Thank you to all who donated food.

We believe that everyone enjoyed the afternoon and hopefully will believe in God's Son, born for us all.

In **January** we had a lovely noisy and fun-filled Messy Church. We welcomed some new families (what are the chances of us having two lovely new girls called Delilah!) We learned a lot about what gifts the children received for Christmas, but also what gifts they GAVE. With the theme of "Epiphany" the children enjoyed so many different crafts.

A video of the Wise Men or Kings following the star to find the Baby, King Jesus, started the afternoon. We lustily sang "We three Kings of Orient are", and then crowded the craft tables to have fun with creativity. They iced biscuits with starry decorations, decorated boxes filled with the gift of a sweet, covered golden crowns with sticky gems, played a camel racing game, painted beautiful stars, decorated jars with wise men and lights, made star hanging mobiles and painted giant wise men for our kids display board. Phew!

In our worship time Heather re-told the story of the kings finding Jesus in a stable and not in a palace, and heard about the gifts they gave to Him. We heard that Jesus is with us all the time and that although being a follower of Jesus doesn't mean that everything is easy, we can know that He is always there with us.

Our MC supper was lasagne with vegetables, salad and cheese, followed by yummy sponge and custard. This creativity malarkey gives everyone an enormous appetite - evinced by the number of those who wanted seconds!

Our next Messy Church meets on Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> February from 3.45 pm to 6 pm (hmm, I wonder what our theme will be



?)

## **CHRISTMAS QUIZ: TRUE OR FALSE? ANSWERS**

### **1 The Bible says that Jesus was born in December?**

**False:** *The Bible doesn't mention when Jesus was born. The best evidence points towards late September/ early October. The shepherds were still tending to their flocks in the fields, but practice was that they would only keep their flocks in the fields from April to October, taking them back home to shelter them over the winter months.*

### **2 Jesus was not born in 0 AD?**

**True:** *Jesus could not have been born in the year 0 AD as it doesn't actually exist historically - our calendar jumps straight from 1 BC to 1 AD with no intervening year zero! The birth of Christ is generally accepted to be around 5 or 6 BC, as Herod died in 4 BC.*

### **3 We are told that Mary rode into Bethlehem on a donkey?**

**False:** *Although perfectly possible that she rode on a donkey, the Bible says nothing about how Mary entered Bethlehem, only says that she came with Joseph.*

### **4 Jesus was circumcised on the 8th day of his life?**

**True:** *Jesus was an Israelite (Jew) and therefore would have been circumcised according to the law of Moses on the 8th day. (Luke 2: 21)*

### **5 Early Christians celebrated the birth of Jesus?**

**False:** *There is no mention of either the apostles or the early Christians celebrating the birth of Jesus. There is no trace of Christmas until it was first mentioned by the Roman Church in 336 AD.*

### **6 The barn animals miraculously spoke the night Jesus was born?**

**False:** *The barn animals talking is an ancient myth that has absolutely no biblical grounding.*

### **7 God is the real father of Jesus?**

**True:** *Joseph was the stepfather of Jesus, but God is his real father.*

### **8 Jesus always celebrated his birthday?**

**False:** *The idea of celebrating birthdays is a pagan one and neither the Jews, the apostles nor Jesus would have celebrated them.*

**9 Micah foretold that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem?**

**True:** *The prophet Micah prophesised that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem, 500 years before the event. (Micah 5 v 2)*

**10 Mary, mother of Jesus, did not remain a virgin for the rest of her life?**

**True:** *Mary went on to have other children with her husband Joseph. Church tradition shouldn't be a reason to ignore what the Bible tells us. (Mark 6:3, Matt 13: 55 - 56, Ps 69:8-9, Gal 1:19)*

**11 God told people to remember the birth of his son?**

**False:** *We are told to remember Jesus' death, not his birth (1 Cor 11: 23 - 26)*

**12 The angels told the shepherds that they should worship the baby Jesus?**

**False:** *The angels did not tell the shepherds to worship Jesus, the shepherds merely went to 'see' the baby Jesus and when the shepherds returned they were praising and worshipping God, not the baby Jesus. (Luke 2: 15, 20)*

**13 The angel said "Peace on earth to all men"?**

**False:** *The angel said "on earth peace, goodwill toward men". The word 'peace' from a biblical sense does not mean the absence of war or strife between people, but rather a 'peace with God', a peace that Jesus was to make with God at his sacrifice. Goodwill comes from the Hebrew ratzah, which is often associated with acceptable sacrifice, thus 'goodwill toward men' means reconciliation through the greatest of all Days of Atonement - Jesus' sacrifice. The alternative textual reading of: 'to men of goodwill', means the same thing: 'peace to men who know themselves reconciled to God through Jesus'. (Luke 2: 14)*

**14 The wise men were present at the birth site of Jesus?**

**False:** *Almost every depiction of the nativity scene shows well dressed wise men, surrounded by shepherds, presenting their gifts to Jesus while he was in the manger. The Bible truth is very different (Matt 2: 11). They met in a house and Jesus was a young child: it is possible that he was walking and talking by the time they reached him. Herod ordered the killing of all the children up to two years old for he knew that Jesus could have been nearly two years old by then. (Matt 2: 16)*

**15 We are told that the angels sang at the announcement of Jesus' birth?**

**False:** *The carol "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" may suggest they did, but the Bible doesn't say anything specific about the angels singing. (Luke 2: 13)*

**16 The Bible tells us that three kings riding on camels visited Jesus?**

**False:** *The Bible does mention magi coming to visit Jesus, but does not say how many or that they were kings or riding camels. There were at least two as the word magi is plural, but there could have been many more. The Bible simply mentions three gifts. (Read Matt Ch 2)*

**17 Mary gave birth on the night that she arrived in Bethlehem?**

**False:** *The Bible would suggest otherwise (Luke 2: 6). Arriving in town well before her due date would make more sense.*

**18 The star led the wise men straight to Jesus?**

**False:** *The star led them first to King Herod, after which they saw the star again, leading them to Jesus, but they were two separate sightings of the star and not continuous (see Matt 2: 2, 9)*

**19 The tradition of giving presents at Christmas comes from the wise men presenting gifts?**

**False:** *In pre-Christian Rome, the emperors compelled their most despised citizens to bring offerings during the Saturnalia festival (in December) and Kalends (in January). Later, this ritual expanded to include gift-giving among the general populace. The Catholic Church gave this custom a Christian flavour by re-rooting it in the supposed gift-giving of Saint Nicholas.*

**20 25<sup>th</sup> December was originally the date of a Roman festival?**

**True:** *The original significance of 25<sup>th</sup> Dec is that it was a well-known festival celebrating the annual return of the sun. 21<sup>st</sup> Dec is the winter solstice (shortest day of the year and a key date on the calendar), but 25<sup>th</sup> Dec was the first day that ancients could clearly note that the days were definitely getting longer and sunlight was returning. On this day the Romans worshipped the 'Unconquered Sun' or Sun god.*

*The date for Christmas was chosen by the Roman Catholic Church. Because Rome dominated most of the "Christian" world for centuries, the date became tradition throughout most of Christendom.*

*So, why was 25<sup>th</sup> Dec chosen? Since no one knows the day of his birth, the Roman Catholic Church felt free to choose this date. The Church wished to replace the pagan festival with a Christian holiday. The psychology was that is easier to take away an unholy (but traditional) festival from the population when you can replace it with a good one.*

**1** Which of the following events came immediately after the Last Supper?

- The ascension
- The betrayal and arrest
- The crucifixion

**2** Who were the first people reported to have seen Jesus after his resurrection?

- Jesus' female followers
- The Roman soldiers
- The 12 disciples

**3** What are the two types of sin in Christianity?

- Good sin and bad sin
- Godly sin and human sin
- Original sin and personal sin

**4** What is meant by atonement?

- The idea that, through Jesus, God and humanity are reconciled and their relationship is healed
- The idea of being saved from sin
- The idea that God has blessed Christians who are devout

**5** Which of these places do only Catholics believe in?

- Hell
- Heaven
- Purgatory

**6** Whom do Christians believe will decide what happens in a person's afterlife?

- God
- Satan
- The person's friends and family