



KINGSDOWN MESSENGER



December 2020 - January 2021



Kingsdown Methodist Church



STOP PRESS Kingsdown will re-open 6 December 09.30 am

You will need to book a place with Kathleen Loveridge.
kathleen.loveridge@btinternet.com

Whilst we are permitted to worship, we are not under tier 2 permitted to socialise at church with people outside of families/bubbles

Each week the Services and other 'meetings' in the Ealing Trinity Circuit are currently being presented on-line look at:

<https://www.ealingtrinity.org.uk/advent-series/>

On Sue's pages (3, 4 & 5) you will find some more information about the various Zoom sessions and some of the current links.

To the Kingsdown Church family

With all good wishes for
a happy and peaceful
Christmas

and hopes for a joyful
New Year

From The Editors -
Pam and Alan



The KINGSDOWN MESSENGER
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Dear Friends,



This year we will be participating in “**Watching and Waiting**”, an Advent Course prepared for us by the London District of the Methodist Church. The Course has been designed so that it can be carried out individually or in groups.

There are four sessions, one intended to be studied each week after the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Sundays in Advent respectively. You can download the materials for your own use from:

https://b2d085cf-ea51-4e1f-b8a8-1520c1e10af1.filesusr.com/ugd/e0f447_360ea2de84f6497d8c0cc1993b3a851e.pdf

If you are **unable to work electronically** we can deliver you a hard copy of the course. Please contact your minister about this.

Obviously the way we are doing things this year is different to previous years, in that we will not be holding groups in churches, but on ‘Zoom’ instead. There is also an advantage this year though since people can also participate individually if they wish.

Zoom Groups

We will be holding “Watching and Waiting” Zoom groups to discuss the materials at the following times: *(some of these dates may have passed before you are able to read this. Ed.)*

Monday mornings at 11.00am – 12.15pm on 30th November and 7th, 14th and 21st December

Monday evenings at 8.00pm - 9.15pm on 30th November and 7th, 14th and 21st December.

The Zoom link for both of these is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81274396881?pwd=THY4SXJGElExaCtseDIJeEpDV1NSdz09>

Meeting ID: 812 7439 6881
Passcode: 313010

Thursday afternoons at 2.00pm – 3.30pm on 26th November, 3rd, 10th and 17th December

Thursday evenings at 8.00pm – 9.30pm on 26th November, 3rd, 10th and 17th December on the following Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82320570313?pwd=S0J3UWFIS3JsSUxrZDkzS3VnVm1oQT09>

Meeting ID: 823 2057 0313

Passcode: 763073

If you don't have a laptop, PC or tablet, you can dial into any of these groups by phone - call one of the following numbers and enter the Passcode 763073 for the group when prompted:

020 3901 7895 - 020 3051 2874 - 020 3481 5237

020 3481 5240 - 0131 460 1196

Preparation for those participating in groups:

Read the suggested readings in the course book

Read the week's reflection.

Optionally note:

- a. What is the most significant point being made in the reflection that you would like to share with the group? Why?
- b. A question raised for you by the reflection which you would like to explore with the group? Perhaps something you disagreed with? Perhaps something you would like to explore the range of opinion on? ... Or a question which came to you for some other reason .

For those participating individually

Either simply work through the booklet OR, if you would like to share your thoughts by phone with somebody else, you could arrange that by preparing in the same way as the group participants. If you would like to talk with someone on the phone each week, and are unable to find someone to do this with yourself please phone Sue Male on 020 8579 8114 who will find you someone to share with, or share with you herself

.Worship on the Sundays of Advent

We intend to ensure that everyone is included in Advent Worship. For each Sunday, the Circuit will be providing:

- Worship in church buildings if permitted to be open, under Government Guidelines. Please note that under current guidelines the churches will certainly not re-open before 6 December (2nd Sunday in Advent)
- Video Services
- Written orders of service for those who cannot access the videos.
- *(Since the video services are being put together in the last week of November the written scripts are only likely to be put out JUST before Advent Sunday on 29th November).*

(Service link: [Advent 1 - Sunday Worship. 29NOV20 - YouTube](#))

Sunday worship will be based on the same readings as the Advent Course.

I hope that many of you will be involved in the Advent Course – either individually, or in groups.

Please contact Sue Male on the numbers below, or by email if you need any additional information.



020 8579 8114 - 07939 150194

With Blessings,

Sue



Family News

Doreen Winston has been giving us news on her sister **Rita Brewster's** progress following her fall. Rita was unfortunate enough to land in hospital with the need for a replacement hip and has now been discharged but, for the time being, is staying with her daughter Alison. Every good wish for a speedy recovery Rita from all at Kingsdown.

Rita Safta

At a special 'Covid secure' ceremony at Ealing Town Hall on Saturday 21st November **Rita Safta** finally completed the process of becoming a British citizen. **Gerald Barton** accompanied Rita at the ceremony as only one guest was allowed but **Sue Barton** was able to see proceedings from the waiting area.



Rita was granted 'Settled Status' in February 2019 and then had to wait one year before applying for citizenship. In the meantime she passed the required language test and the 'Life in the UK Test' before submitting her application just before the lockdown at the end of March. The process was inevitably delayed by the pandemic but happily Ealing Council have been able to arrange special ceremonies during the current

restrictions.

The photo was kindly taken by the Registrar after the ceremony with a very special witness (well, a photo) peeking from behind.

Sincere condolences from the Kingsdown family to **Kath Jarrett** on the recent sad news of her son David's death at his home in Newcastle.

It was also concerning to learn that **Hazel Pennell's** daughter **Maria Plews** had contracted Covid-19 but fortunately did not have it too severely and, again fortunately, husband **Tony** and son **Matthew** both tested negative. (We trust the whole Kingsdown family will stay safe and well, pending the arrival of a tried and tested vaccine in the not too distant future!)

from Barnton-on-Sea



Although we are far away our wishes are sincere that you all have a Happy and Holy Christmas and good health all through the coming year.

God Bless - Lots of Love - Jill and Roy Ward



We three kings of Orient are... what?

"A cold coming they had of it at this time of the year, just the worst time of the year to take a journey, and specially a long journey, in. The ways deep, the weather sharp, the days short, the sun farthest off, in solstitio brumali, the very dead of winter."



It was 1622, and the Bishop of Winchester, Launcelot Andrews, was preaching a magnificent sermon to King James I. Reckoned one of the best preachers ever, Launcelot Andrews' words were later taken up by T S Eliot and transformed into his wonderful poem 'The Journey of the Magi'. What a vivid picture – we can see it all! The camels' breath steaming in the night air as the kings, in their gorgeous robes of silk and cloth-of-gold and clutching their precious gifts, kneel to adore the baby in the manger.

Yet the Bible does not give us as much detail as some people think. Tradition down the centuries has added a great deal more. For instance, we know from St Matthew that the magi were 'wise', or learned men of some sort, but we do not know if they were kings or not. The Bible tells us there were several; tradition has decided upon three, and even named them: Balthassar, Melchior, and Gaspar. But the Bible does tell us that the magi gave baby Jesus three highly symbolic gifts: gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. Gold stands for kingship, frankincense for worship, and myrrh for anointing – anticipating his death.

There is a lovely ancient mosaic in Ravenna, Italy, that is 1,500 years old. It depicts the wise men in oriental garb of trousers and Phrygian caps, carrying their gifts past palm trees towards the star that they followed... straight to Jesus.

Boys' Brigade Newsletter



Well, we managed to get in three glorious weeks of BB before the half-term holiday and before the subsequent arrival of Lockdown 2, and what a fabulous time we had! We were delighted to note that almost every single Boy returned to the fold and they were desperate to return to some form of normal life.



Of course, we had to make many concessions to the new rules: no bugling, no vaulting, no pizza nights, and a careful review of our current programme to remove any games which may have brought the Boys closer than strictly necessary. But there was still time for drill practice, football, jumping games, Christian leadership classes, and lots more of

our favourites BB activities.

Leaders wore masks and/or visors all evening which was frustrating but necessary and safety was our first priority at all times. But, all in all, BB worked very well indeed and we look forward to the return of face-to-face meetings as soon as we are allowed.



Some West London BB Companies have not fared as well as us and two have closed permanently as an indirect result of the Covid situation, which is very sad indeed. We were fortunate in choosing to return to BB at the beginning of October as we did get to see the Boys for three meetings -- some BB Companies

were holding off until after half-term, which means that those groups have not yet met at all.

It was unfortunate that we were unable to assemble for Remembrance Day. The BB were due to lead the service in person at Kingsdown on that day, and we had offered to put together an online service if required, but sadly, it was not to be. One of our BB lads who lives near the church, however, did stand in his front garden and played Last Post at 11am in true BB style: well done, Mr Calvert, top job!



It is obviously impossible for us to make any solid plans for 2021, but we have been invited to defend our Best band in London title via a virtual competition in the spring. This will be most interesting (especially as we are forbidden to play bugles indoors at the moment) but we do like a challenge!

We have received many messages of support, and several financial donations, during the closed season, and we are quite overwhelmed by your concern -- thank you all so much for your love and prayers.



We look forward to worshipping with you again when it is deemed safe so to do!

Tony Plews Captain

**ALL
WE
CAN**

Extraordinary Gifts That help some of the worlds poorest communities.

Practical gifts that help people in some of the world's poorest communities to become all that they can.

From providing a child in Uganda with a bicycle to get to and from school, to ensuring that a family in Zimbabwe has clean water to drink—you will find gifts to capture the hearts and imaginations of your loved ones and make a world of difference to a family in need this Christmas.

With every Extraordinary Gift, you will receive a card to pass on to your loved one, showing them the kind of difference their gift could make.



Busy Bees £14.00



Chirpy Chicks £15.00



Tools for Success £16.00



Super Stoves £12.00



Make a Splash £15.00



Pedal Power £66.00

There are some Extraordinary Gifts leaflets available from the Editors.

Go to www.allwecan.org.uk/shop to buy your gift or to use a link to make your donation to help the poorest of the poor in some of the worlds poorest communities.

By post: All we Can, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR,
or telephone 020 7467 5132

If you use Amazon then look at Amazon Smile - register and then a donation will go to Methodist Relief and Development Fund (All We Can's formal name) every time you shop.

All We Can, as well as other NGOs and development agencies, have criticised the government's decision to merge the Department for International Development with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, calling it an 'ill thought through decision, at a time when the world's poorest communities are most vulnerable.'

Dr Louise Brooke-Smith OBE, All We Can's Chair of Trustees, added 'While we note the government's stance to retain a target of 0.7% GDP as the benchmark for international aid, clearly in a post Covid-19 era and economic downturn, this will result in reduced funds being available to support communities around the world most in need.

It will therefore be even more important that all aid is expertly allocated and managed, without being tied to any political dogma.

Thank you for all the donations that you have made to All We Can over the year helping the projects that are supporting the poorest of the poor who are vulnerable to Covid as well as all the natural and man made disasters.

There has been significant criticism of the merger, but in any event, it will be vital not to lose DFID's expertise and retain a transparent approach going forward. In this way, both the global communities assisted, and UK taxpayers will be assured that the very best was being achieved.

Furthermore, the role of the NGO sector, working proactively with government, will continue to be vital to ensure that those in need can be supported in the most appropriate way and the UK's strong reputation, integrity and effectiveness in this field is maintained.'

(Extract from original comment published June 2020)

The Government announced on 25 November that they plan to reduce the 0.7% of GDP promised down to 0.5%.

Alan Smith - AWC Co-ordinator



Will YOU support our Appeals?



Christmas Appeal

Build hope for communities like Imote's in the face of Coronavirus pandemic.



Hurricane Iota Emergency Appeal

Help communities in Central America who have been devastated by Hurricane Iota, just a few weeks after Hurricane Eta.

<https://donate.christiaid.org/appeals/emergencies>

Or call 020 7523 2269

You may have forgotten.....

The effects of Cyclone Idai, which swept through Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe in March 2019, are still being felt a year later. Idai destroyed crops, ruined lives and left millions without food.

In the immediate aftermath, at least 900 people were killed. Around 2.5 million more – especially those in remote areas – were affected.



Our local partners in Zimbabwe and Malawi were able to support them with the emergency food, water, clothing, shelter and medicine supplies they desperately needed.

One year on, communities in Zimbabwe are struggling. They face a grave hunger crisis as crop failures, drought and food shortages continue.

Working with our local partners, we've been able to help Idai survivors start to rebuild their lives, but there's still much more to be done.

Please donate to the Cyclone Idai Appeal so we can continue to be there for those in need.

Reflective Thoughts This Autumn

"Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower."

Albert Camus

This November, marks milestones in my life, in more ways than I could have ever imagined, when as a teenager, I left Jamaica in 1954, to commence my Nurse Training at Moorfields Eye Hospital, London, followed by Completing my General Nurse Training in Cambridge in 1959!

So, November 2020, marks, **66 years**, since I embarked on my Nursing Journey, that took me from a student nurse then, to becoming Health Visiting Officer & Professional Officer at the Statutory Body that regulates the Nursing Profession, whose main task, is to ensure safe practice to the Public, by Registered Nurse practitioners - 1990-1992. (Currently- The Nursing & Midwifery Council)

I am therefore giving profound thanks to all those professional Women and to a lesser extent - Men, in numbers, who had recognised my potential and enabled me without prejudicial treatment, long before I could plot my career path!

When I left home in October 1954, straight after finishing school, that Summer- the Intention was, that I would return to Jamaica after 2-3 Years! And now, here I am, still living here and perhaps, this is where I will be until life's end!

But, what about those enablers who were, all English! I had learnt from them as supreme Role Models and exemplars, either implicitly and explicitly, how to become a sound practitioner in the varied Fields of professional practice I have undertaken on this unique journey!

I was able to understand, deeply, the English culture in its many forms, across a variety of fields, enhanced, through my study of the Behavioural Sciences, that included, different Branches of psychology, sociology and Social Policy. All of which has helped me, to fine tune the services I was to offer, to patients, families, school children, student nurses, post graduate nurses, who embarked on Community Nursing Courses, through my teaching in homes; Schools, Schools of Nursing; Royal College of Nursing; N E London & Oxford Brookes, Polytechnic – (currently - Universities), that encompassed, hundreds of individuals!

What a privilege, because in all of this, my continuing learning of the human situation, has been enhanced!

Hence my Professional Practice, in climbing the professional ladder has Included: - returning to Moorfields as a Charge Nurse in the early 1960's; Health Visitor in Charge- Raveron Park Clinic, Greenford; Asst. Health Education officer & Snr. Nurse Education, Ed. & Training- L B of Camden; Snr Lecturer N E London Polytechnic and Principal Lecturer- Oxford Brooks.

Today, I still remember the words of my mother, who died when I was not yet 11 and the eldest of 6 siblings – *"Blossom, Do things well or not at all"*- when I did chores, she requested me to do and had persecuted the task, shoddily! And my father, who on our way back from my Interview at Moorfields, where he had accompanied me to my Interview with the then Matron - Margaret Makellar, in November 1954. (Matron had just told me that I was successful in my interview and could commence training!)

He said this – *"Blossom! One thing I want to say to you! When you go there, always remember the next Black nurse, who will follow you"*

I trust that, in my Nursing Journey, I have been able to demonstrate that I heeded their exhortation! The Photo attached, shows Me at the bedside of two of my patients, then - Christmas 1956 - notice my Nursing Badge, shaped in the form of a Cross!. And so, I wish everyone- *'A Happy & Blessed Christmas 2020!*



Blossom Jackson

25 DECEMBER - CHRISTMAS THROUGHOUT THE CHRISTIAN WORLD

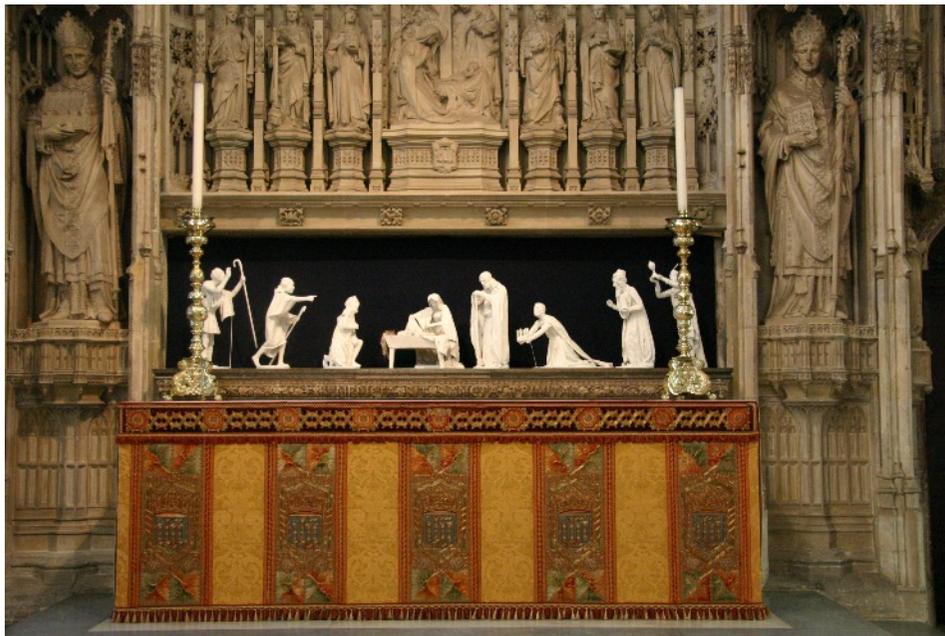
For nearly four weeks leading up to Christmas Christians recognise a period called Advent. It means 'coming'. It is a time of spiritual preparation. 'Coming' refers to Jesus' first coming as a baby, but it also looks forward to a day when Jesus is expected to return in triumph at his 'second coming' to establish perfect justice and a new order of peace.

Originally Christians marked Advent as a time when they refrained from excessive eating and drinking. Then Christmas Day reintroduced them to the joys of feasting. Christmas celebrations lasted for twelve days, with gifts exchanged as a climax at Epiphany (6 January). Today, however, Advent is more likely to be associated with accelerating festivity, with the days following Christmas something of an anti-climax until 'twelfth night', on which decorations are removed. Many Christians worldwide are trying to revive the spirit of Advent by setting aside time to pray and address global poverty.



Christmas Day is celebrated as the anniversary of Jesus' birth, although the actual date is not known. Most Christians celebrate it on 25th December. However, the Orthodox Church (the ancient churches in Eastern Europe and parts of Asia) follows a different calendar and celebrates on 7th January. Christians make a point of taking communion on Christmas Day. Many make it the first thing they do as the clock strikes midnight.

On 6th January the Christmas festival continues with a celebration of Epiphany, which means 'the appearance'. Christians remember the visit of wise men (magi) to Jesus, bringing gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. The Christmas tradition of exchanging gifts originally honoured these men, who were the first non-Jews (Gentiles) to worship Jesus. It forms a reminder that in Jesus God was giving Himself for the benefit of the entire world.



Nativity scene from Winchester Cathedral



Scooped... by God!

As cub reporter – on a story,
I'm looking for some by-line glory.

A city full of strangers milling,
surely some have really thrilling
tales of travel and adventure.
Of highway theft or bandit capture?

But no one here too keen on talking
after miles and miles of walking,
and every inn and tavern full
with hardly space to park a mule.

Of course the town is full of rumour
with folk from far away as Sumer.

Some say there's been a funny
light; they've seen it in the sky – at
night.

Others claim that sheep run free,
ignored by shepherds on the spree!

As one of the more crackpot things
I'm told to look for foreign kings,
lurking near some local stables!

My boss would think I'd lost my
marbles.

That's hardly going to make my
name, or give dull old Bethlehem
lasting fame.

Many people say: “I can understand God, but I can’t see where Jesus fits into the picture.”

A theologian called Athanasius, Egyptian by birth and Greek by education, gave the answer to your question 1600 years ago. He said: “The only system of thought into which Jesus Christ will fit is the one in which HE is the starting point!”

Once we try to begin with our own human-based attempt at understanding God and the meaning of life – let alone the place that Christ occupies – we’ll be like the man who tries to do up his shirt buttons, beginning with the wrong button. He may hope that it will all work out, and that the shirt will eventually fit properly, but it never will.

So, you need to begin with Christ, if you want the picture to make sense. He is right there in the Bible, from the start. All Creation finds both its origin and its fulfilment in Him, its rightful heir (Colossians 1:15-17). You will notice from Colossians 1:17 that, far from Christ fitting into our system, we can only ‘fit’ – and thus find coherence and meaning – in His... or rather, in HIM.

It is through Christ alone that we can know the face of God, and His salvation in our lives. Jesus is fully God and fully human, Christ – the God-Man – is the perfect mediator. By His saving death He has bridged the gulf between heaven and earth (Philippians 2:5-11).

No one else will do. That was the blazing conviction of those first-century Christians. Beside Christ there was no other name (Acts 4:12). Historically, Christ’s name claims supreme recognition in all the areas of life that matter most. It happened in the world of worship – where the Druids, ju-ju men, witch doctors, temple priests and the gigantic gods Mithras, Serapis, Diana, Jupiter and Venus were all swept away.

It also happened in the world of suffering. When we put the leaders of history and of thought together, it is quite clear that none of them suffered as Jesus did. In Him we see God incarnate, living among us, loving, suffering, dying and reclaiming. This fact alone is enough to explain the beginning of hospitals in our world. They were never begun by a state department. They owe their origin to the influence of Christ, and reflect His compassion.

It happened in the world of creativity. Christ has inspired symphonies, paintings, soaring architectures and enduring literature.

Take Christ away, and the writings of Shakespeare would be meaningless. Atheism, by its very nature, could never have this impact, for atheism has no wings.

It happened in the world of eternity. The pre-Christian epitaphs say it all: 'I was not, I was born, I lived, I am not, that is all'. 'Guesswork is over all', Xenophanes had written. Into that world exploded the message of Christ, bodily raised from death, never to die again. That message alone is enough to change our view of the entire universe. The universe itself only fits because of Christ.

By the Revd Richard Bewes,
a former Rector of All Souls Langham Place, London.



The Virgin

*Behold the Virgin approaching near,
And the Christ so young upon her breast,
Angels low-bowing before them here,
And the King of life saying, 'Tis best'.*

Old Celtic prayer



Lines from Invocation of Peace

*Deep peace, pure white of the moon to you;
Deep peace, pure green of the grass to you;
Deep peace, pure brown of the earth to you;
Deep peace, pure grey of the dew to you,
Deep peace, pure blue of the sky to you!
Deep peace of the running wave to you,
Deep peace of the flowing air to you,
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you.*

By Fiona Macleod (19th century Celtic visionary and romantic)

DON'T THROW IT AWAY – IT MIGHT COME IN USEFUL

This phrase is indicative and known to people of a certain age.

Cutting off buttons; zips; turning collars on shirts. All reminiscent of a time when nothing was thrown away. Button boxes were as normal in a household as today's electric kettles. My mother patched sheets; darned socks sewed and knitted. I even possessed a knitted swimming costume, which as you can guess didn't leave much to the imagination!

Well, during this lockdown I have an admission. I've thrown things away!. Not literally, as our local RSPCA has benefited from my items. But I have to confess to this crime.

What brought this about, this cavalier attitude, after a lifetime of collecting and hoarding.

The dreaded virus is responsible, but the final straw came with the collapse of a ceiling in my dining room. A hundred years of dust and plaster lying everywhere.

After the initial shock I started the clean-up. Huge lumps of plaster, dirt and dust were removed. Broken ornaments thrown away (nothing valuable) and the Hoover bag emptied more times in two hours than the whole of the previous year.

But it was during this cleaning period that I became acutely aware of how much bric-a-brac I had collected; how many vases in the cupboard (12), clothes and books. More importantly I realised how materialistic I had become. I needed to clean up my act. I had time and I now had the incentive.

I have recycled, redistributed and reviewed what I really need. Very therapeutic. I came across items I never knew I had and to be truthful not sure where they came from. I can now place things that I treasure in a spot to be seen. I don't have to dust so often.

All very beneficial and as the old saying goes "you can't take it with you when you go"

Janet Smith

Christmas to Me



*Christmas to me is nativity
And the sound of carol-singing;
But to others it is revelry
And the sound of shop tills ringing.*

*Christmas to me is shepherds
On a hillside attending their sheep;
And the sound of angelic voices
Over a town bathed in sleep.*

*Christmas to me is the Magi
Who put all of their faith in a star,
And in search of the little Christ child
They willingly travelled so far.*

*Christmas to me is worship
Giving thanks for the Saviour's birth;
But to many of the folk I know
Christmas has no real worth.*

*So what will YOU see this Christmas?
Will you think of that baby so small?
And recognise that the love of God
Came to earth that first Christmas of all?*

By Colin Hammacott

30 years ago, on 1st December 1990 British and French construction workers on the Channel Tunnel broke through the last wall of rock separating the two halves, and Britain and France were linked for the first time in thousands of years.



*Detail from part of main
altar window
St Thomas the Martyr
Winchelsea, Sussex*

Christmas Frustration????

I said to God, upon my knees
"O Lord, I am so cross!
"That gift I sent to Aunt Denise
"Within the post is lost!
"That tree I bought for forty pounds
"(Well, just a penny less)
"Its needles lie upon the ground
"It looks a total mess!"

"I know," said God, "I understand,
"I sent my Son, you know.
"He came to Earth, just as I'd
planned
"Two thousand years ago
"Was born within a stable bare –
"The cattle heard Him cry
"He spoke of love, men didn't care
"They led Him out to die."

"No gift was given with such love
"No higher price was paid.
"He left His throne of light above
"For sin His life to trade.
"But even after all these years
"This gift you men eschew,
"So Christmas is a time of tears

"For Me, as well as you."

By Nigel Beeton

CHRISTMAS SPOKEN HERE...

One day I was staring through the window of a beautiful little Christmas shop. It was packed with Christmas items, even though Christmas was still six months away. There were exquisite creche scenes from Italy, Germany, and Norway. There were fuzzy-faced elves and jolly old Santa Clauses, sleighs and reindeer of every size and description, bells and trees, and music boxes.



There were nutcrackers and candles and electric lights, angels and wise men and little drummer boys, stars and snowmen and gingerbread cutouts. The little shop was fairly bursting with Christmas, and a loudspeaker broadcast a medley of Yuletide tunes. It was infectious, even in the summertime. And down in the corner of the front door, where no one could miss it, was the neatest touch of all. It was a small sign that said: **'Christmas Spoken Here'**.

'Christmas Spoken Here'. I cannot imagine a better slogan for the church, at this season or any time of year, than that one. What could say better why we are here? God has entered human history to change its course forever. He has come as a Word, as something said, articulated, put in a message: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). We remember the event each year in song and pageant and decoration. **'Christmas spoken here'**. It has to be spoken here, for it is the basis of all we do.

'Christmas Spoken Here'. It is an appropriate motto for us. The church ought always to speak Christmas. We ought always to be reminded of the Word God has spoken: the intelligible, important, and loving Word of His concern for us. And Christmas is the best time of all the year for remembering it. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth." That is Christmas, and Christmas is spoken here. It will always be spoken here.

Lord, You have spoken to us in the birth and life and death of Jesus and Your Word is plain. Help us to hear it and respond with all our hearts. For there is no other word as intelligible, or important, or loving as this one... Amen

John Killinger

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A Likely Tale

Someone once said the day would come when men would walk upon
the moon, but we just scoffed, "a likely tale!" And,
"that won't happen soon!"

Someone said that they would dig a tunnel *'neath the sea*:
so we could drive across to France and back in time for teal

Someone said we'd fly like birds in buses that had wings, above the
clouds, across the world, and not held up by strings!

Someone said the time would come when friends in distant places
would speak to us on mobile phones and we could see their faces!

With laptops and computers and Ipods, pads and such
Our every need could be supplied on screen with just a touch and ail
the world would be joined up by one great internet
Of ail the likely tales we've heard,
That is the best one yet.

Someone said a star would shine and move across the sky,
coming to rest above the place Where a baby boy would lie_
And wise and learned men would rise and leave their books behind,
to journey through the desert sands a new-born King to find.

While angel voices sang with joy and shepherds bowed their head,
a mother laid her precious child upon a manger bed.
They said God's son would walk on earth and give His life for men,
healing and blessing all who came, To die and rise again.

As every year we celebrate God with us here on earth
and listen for the angels to proclaim the holy birth,
will our lives bear witness that God's love *does* prevail
or is the Christmas story just another likely tale?



Doreen Warman
Eastcote Methodist Church

'The Wise Men' by G.K. Chesterton

Step softly, under snow or rain,
To find the place where men can pray;
The way is all so very plain That we may lose the way.

Oh, we have learnt to peer and pore
On tortured puzzles from our youth,
We know all labyrinthine lore,
We are the three wise men of yore,
And we know all things but the truth.

We have gone round and round the hill
And lost the wood among the trees,
And learnt long names for every ill,
And served the mad gods, naming still
The furies the Eumenides.

The gods of violence took the veil
Of vision and philosophy,
The Serpent that brought all men bale,
He bites his own accursed tail,
And calls himself Eternity.

Go humbly...it has hailed and snowed...
With voices low and lanterns lit;
So very simple is the road,
That we may stray from it.

The world grows terrible and white,
And blinding white the breaking day;
We walk bewildered in the light,
For something is too large for sight,
And something much too plain to say.

The Child that was ere worlds begun
(...We need but walk a little way,
We need but see a latch undone...)
The Child that played with moon and sun
Is playing with a little hay.

The house from which the heavens are fed,
The old strange house that is our own,
Where trick of words are never said,
And Mercy is as plain as bread,
And Honour is as hard as stone.

Go humbly, humble are the skies,
And low and large and fierce the Star;
So very near the Manger lies
That we may travel far.

Hark! Laughter like a lion wakes
To roar to the resounding plain.
And the whole heaven shouts and shakes,
For God Himself is born again, And we are little children walking
Through the snow and rain.



November Shopping List

Tinned Fruit & Vegetables
Long Life Fruit Juice & Squash
Ready Made Custard – *tins or cartons*
Vegetarian Chilli, Curry & Pies (*Fray Bentos*)
Instant Coffee & Drinking Chocolate
Tinned Fish
Jam & Peanut Butter
Feminine Hygiene – *towels/pads only, not tampons*
Shaving Gear – *foam & razors*
Laundry Products – *powder, liquid, tablets (small sizes please)*

Thank you!

Keep up to date with @EalingFoodbank on

PRAYERS FOR CHRISTMAS

Lord, on this joyful day we give thanks that you are Emmanuel, 'God with Us'. May we find hope, renewed joy and lasting peace today and for the year to come.

Father, we pray for all those who are working through the holiday season, many of them to support and to protect us. We ask that you watch over them and be with them in their working lives.

Jesus was born into poverty and this Christmas we pray for all those experiencing financial hardship in the UK and in the world's poorest places.

Though our Christmas celebrations may be a little different this year, we look to you as eagerly as did the shepherds and the Magi, learning from your compassion and following you in all things.

Prayers from Kirsty Smith, CBM Prayer Book

CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD

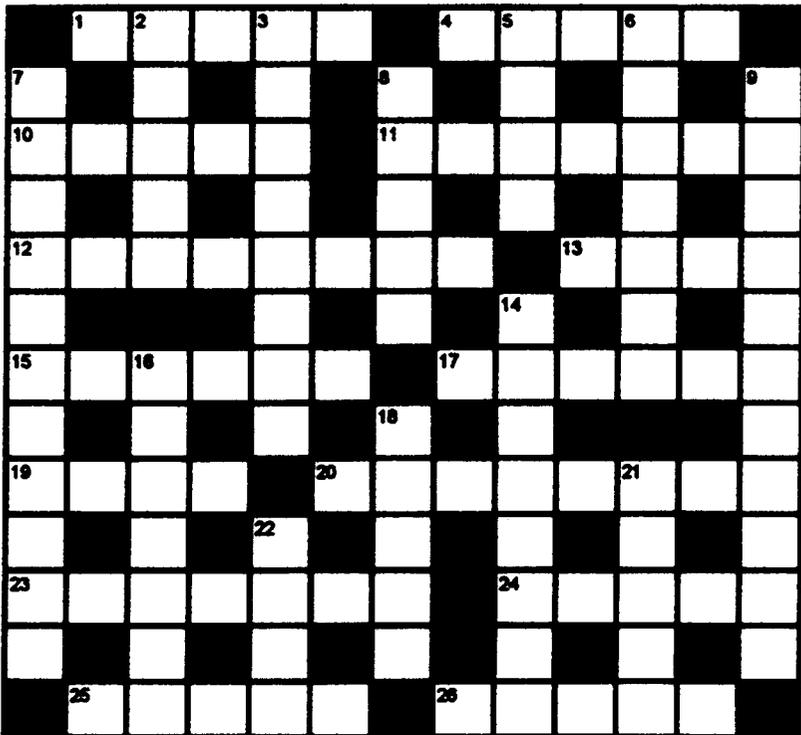
Down

- 2 Author of words of Good King Wenceslas (5)
- 3 First name of Mr Scrooge (8)
- 5 There was no At the inn (4)
- 6 With legs on each side (7)
- 7 You put these up at Christmas (11)
- 8 St Nicholas (5)
- 9 Total abstinence from alcohol (11)
- 14 Lady editor (8)
- 16 A frame supporting a table (7)
- 18 Three wise men found a.....born baby (5)
- 21 Carol stanza..... (5)
- 22 Plant with large showy flowers (4)

CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD

Across

- 1 A host of these appeared at Christmas (5)
- 4 The playing of the merry.....,sweet singing in.the choir (5)
- 10 To fill with joy (5)
- 11 One of twelve disciples of Jesus (7)
- 12 Light opera, often with spoken dialogue (8)
- 13 Christmas present (4)
- 15 Two are worn by reindeer (6)
- 17 Season before Christmas (6)
- 19 At a white Christmas, roads may be (4)
- 20 A religious feast (8)
- 23 Based on inherent moral sense (7)
- 24 Weird (5)
- 25 Special Christmas meal (5)
- 26 Oxen and surrounded the manger (5)



Christmas Crossword Answers on P31

GOD IS WITH *US*



Our buildings have been closed this year but we have been at work and God's love is uncontainable.

The Methodist Church Christmas campaign **#Godiswithus** shares people's stories about their walk with God in this extraordinary year.

To find out more about this year's Christmas campaign and to help us promote it, visit

www.findingourhope.co.uk

To order resources for your church, visit www.methodistpublishing.org.uk



The **Methodist Church** 

Mistletoe



This time of year you can see all sorts of traditions played out with regard to Christmas decorations. Strict adherents use holly, ivy and of course, mistletoe. While holly and ivy are to be found in gardens and hedgerows, mistletoe usually only appears in greengrocers' shops, or high in a tree well out of reach.

Mistletoe is hemiparasitic, meaning that although its leaves enable it to feed itself through photosynthesis, its roots invade the host tree or shrub to extract water and other nutrients. Its favourite host trees are apple, lime, hawthorn, poplar or oak and it normally hangs as a large globe, tantalisingly high and totally visible once winter arrives and it is the only green left on the tree. There are some spectacular examples in Windsor Great Park, clearly visible from the path on the opposite side of the River Thames.

We all know about the almost translucent white berries, fleshy and sticky, which form in the forks of mistletoe's many branches. While they are toxic to humans, they are attractive to birds. When birds have enjoyed the juicy flesh, they wipe the remaining seeds off their beaks onto the nearest branch [somewhat like small children wiping sticky hands on any surface close by – mummy's face or clothes?]. With luck the seed remains stuck to the bark and solves mistletoe's problem of reproduction.

In Greek mythology, mistletoe gave access to the Underworld. Romans thought it represented Peace, Love and Understanding and perhaps that is how it has sidled into our Christmas celebrations. The earliest documentary evidence for kissing under mistletoe dates from the sixteenth century. Some people think a berry should be removed after each kiss. Given the small size of pieces generally available these days, perhaps that is a practice not to be pursued!

Kirsty Steel
Parish Pump

Your merry Christmas may depend on what others do for you, but your Happy New Year will most certainly depend on what you do for others.

TO BE ...OR NOT TO BE.....

*Here we go again. Is Christmas off or on?
Which tier are we in...where do we belong?
Will the family be free to come to you,
And share in what you plan to do?*

*We know, by now, what we have to fear
In this extraordinary, unbelievable year.
But we ask ourselves... will it do any harm
If we meet each other...and remain calm?*

*We can have the cards and decorations...
And enjoy the usual preparations...
We can shop on line for what we need
If we have a few more mouths to feed.*

*At least we can choose what we have to eat.
Turkey and trimmings...time-honoured treat.
As for the Carol singers, they stay outside.
That's what happens at Christmastide.*

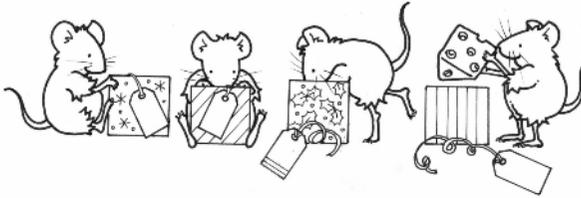
*I don't know about you, but it's what I think.
I plan to have my favourite drink,
And hope to spread some cheer
As we wish each other a better New Year.*

Joyce Hobson

Dear God, so far today I haven't gossiped, lost my temper, been greedy or selfish, but I shall be getting out of bed soon and then I will need your help.



"I am looking for a Christmas Card that contains inclusive language, and yet retains the richness of 16th Century English and is overtly Christian whilst being sensitive to the multi-faith patterns of our dayany suggestions?"



**CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD
ANSWERS**

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| Across | Down |
| 1 Angel | 2 Neale |
| 4 Organ | 3 Ebenezer |
| 10 Elate | 5 Room |
| 11 Apostle | 6 Astride |
| 12 Operetta | 7 Decorations |
| 13 Gift | 8 Santa |
| 15 Antle | 9 Teototaller |
| 17 Advent | 14 Editress |
| 19 Iced | 16 Trestle |
| 20 Festival | 18 Newly |
| 23 Natural | 21 Verse |
| 24 Eerie | 22 Iris |
| 25 Feast | |
| 26 Asses | |

by Michael Dawney