

# **CALNE METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2023**



**Items for future editions can be sent to:**

**Jan Sayers**

**The deadline for the January 2024 issue is**

**Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December**



“It is winter in Narnia,” said Mr. Tumnus, “and has been for ever so long.... always winter, but never Christmas.” This is a line from the beloved story ‘The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe’ by C.S. Lewis. These are words which capture the imagination and remain in the memory long after they have been read for the first time. Always winter, but never Christmas. Christmas is often regarded as a secular event by most of the world around us! In the Christmas season we often struggle to find a single reference to Jesus or God in it. I have learned that our community often affirms the real meaning of Christmas, perhaps in small ways, supporting our carol service or the Christmas tree festival and other events.

Yet less than 1 in 10 will attend a church service over the Christmas period to acknowledge the event which celebrates the birth of Jesus as Saviour of the World. Is our response to do our ‘religious thing’ quietly within the church, or should we try to set an example that shows where our own priorities lie, in what we actually do for others at Christmas?

I grew up in a family that took the heart of Christmas seriously. No Bah Humbug message here, just one of hope and of love, peace, and goodwill. Christmas will always evoke the rustic memories within us all. It is the reason Christmas cards depict icicles hanging from a thatched cottage. It is why robins are shown perched within holly bushes rather than on an old garden bucket.

I try to really embrace Christmas...every decoration, no matter how old, fulfils its Christmas purpose. From the tired old toilet roll tube Father Christmas, to named tree baubles from our grandchildren, where each name has now faded. Every year the tree loses a few more fronds and another set of lights stop working. Every year the star becomes a bit wonkier. But I’ll never be able to part with these things because for as I look at the display, I remember with warmth my early Christmas’s when excitement, joy, peace, and love was so real.

Recently during the stillness of the night, I looked out of my bedroom window, really seeing the wonder of a clear sky, the moon gliding within the stars. Outside as I put out the rubbish the air was quite crisp, and the roads were still. A fox called somewhere in the distance, and I gazed into the quiet road, to appreciate the stillness and beauty of the moment.

I became aware of illuminations shining from the houses in the road. In that instant I fully embraced the beauty of all that was around me, the stillness, the darkness, the crisp air, and the wonder of unexpected light in the darkness. I remembered immediately the waiting for Christmas day...and the hope, and the joy, the event brings to so many. I smiled and I remembered, a small child that removes obstacles, dispels fear, born in love for a world in pain, that cared not to recognize Him, or the gift that he brought. Our lives are often filled with these moments of wonder that move us, yet often we dismiss them.

My own parents have both died but I remember all they taught me about Christmas, of Peace and Goodwill, of giving to others, of it being a time to change and live well. To live, not held in self-interest or Bah Humbug but in faith and hope in Jesus Christ. This is what life is really all about, how we live and love one another, just as He loved us.

So, I ask is this festival for you just a winter event, a bah Humbug trial of shopping and eating and cooking?

Perhaps, this Christmas you may just find the real peace of Christmas within our churches as we proclaim the birth of the greatest gift the world has ever seen.

*'For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.'*

May you find the true blessing of Christmas this year and a peace that this world can never give.



Craig and Elizabeth

## Forthcoming Services:

3 <sup>rd</sup> December	Rev Craig Manley – Holy Communion
10 <sup>th</sup> December	Rev Roy Fowler
17 <sup>th</sup> December	Rev Christine Fowler
24 <sup>th</sup> December	Worship Leaders
24 <sup>th</sup> December	11.30pm Communion with our friends at the Baptist Church
25 <sup>th</sup> December	10.00am Christmas Day Service led by Michele and Derek Gard
31 <sup>st</sup> December	Rev Craig Manley will lead our sector service



## Pastoral News

It is with great sadness that we share news of the death of two people who in the past were very active members of our church. Audrey Scriven died on October 31st and Bill Mason died on 25th November. We pray for all in their bereavement at this time. May God hold them in the palm of his hand and comfort them.

We think of those for whom Christmas and the New Year brings hard memories, for those who feel alone and all who find the winter months particularly hard.

We continue to remember and pray for those receiving treatment and those recovering from treatment; those who have sought advice from clinicians but have not had satisfactory answers; for those bearing the responsibility of looking after family members

Throughout December we particularly pray for Lyn Cooper's pastoral group: Glenis Ansell; Carolyn and Andy Cameron; Jenny and Steven Colby; Hilary Eatwell; Doris and Darkie Hadrell; Sue Johstone; Marion and Mike Pitman; Jacky and Simon Purtell; Vera and Stephen Steadman

It is part of our Christian commitment to care for and support each other so if you have any joys or sorrows that can be shared in our pastoral news please let Ursula know. May you know peace and joy this Christmas.

## **Services for December - Advent - The Christmas Journey**

For this advent season we have adopted the theme "The Christmas Journey"

**3<sup>rd</sup> December. Rev Craig Manley. 10.30am. Staying alert as we wait for Jesus. Advent 1**

With Communion

Jesus said, 'Keep awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.'

**Amen. Come soon, Lord Jesus!**

The first candle is lit on our Advent ring.

Jesus is the light of the world. A light no darkness can ever put out. **Amen**

**10<sup>th</sup> December - Rev Roy Fowler 10.30am. Looking for the Whole Jesus.**

**Advent 2**

Jesus said, 'Do not think that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets: I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them.'

**Amen. Come soon, Lord Jesus!**

The second candle is lit on our Advent ring.

Jesus is the light of the world. A light no darkness can ever put out. **Amen**

**10<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Messy Church 3.00pm. All are Welcome.**

**17<sup>th</sup> December – Christine Fowler. 10.30 am John the Baptist. Advent 3**

Jesus said, 'No one more important than John the Baptist has ever been born; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.'

**Amen. Come soon, Lord Jesus!**

The third candle is lit.

Jesus is the light of the world. A light no darkness can ever put out **Amen.**

**17<sup>th</sup> December – 6.00pm. Carols by candlelight.**

**24<sup>th</sup> December. Worship leaders. 10.30am. Something different for Christmas**

**Advent 4**

Jesus said, 'Anyone who does what my Father in heaven wants is my brother or sister or mother.'

**I am the servant of the Lord. Let it be to me according to his word.**

The fourth candle is lit.

Jesus is the light of the world. A light no darkness can ever put out. **Amen**

**24<sup>th</sup> December -11.30pm. Midnight Communion with our Friends at Calne Baptist Church.**

**25<sup>th</sup> December – Mrs Michele Gard. 10.00am Family Worship for Christmas Day**

Joy to the world!

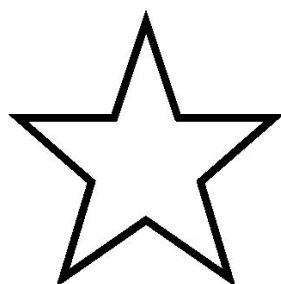
**The Lord has come!**

The central candle is lit.

Jesus is the light of the world. A light no darkness can ever put out. **Amen**

On behalf of the Worship Consultation Committee, we would like to thank everyone who have contributed to our Advent and Christmas Services, the decoration of the church and the flowers including the Advent Ring.

Derek Gard 1/12/2023



# HELP



We need help to decorate the shelves under the windows with suggested themes.

Stars

Angels

Shepherds

Christmas music

Animals of the nativity

The Nativity

Christmas flowers

The three kings

If you would like to decorate a window please let Derek or Ursula know which theme you wish to do.

To be completed by Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December.

Thanks

Derek



Refugee Prayer Focus December 2023

**This must be a really difficult time to be a refugee. Even for those who are not Christians Christmas has gathered significance as a time for families, and it must be so hard to see other families together. Let us pray for all those who are not able to be in their own homes this Christmas for whatever reason.**

# Calne Food Bank

Please visit their website for details of their opening times - [www.calnefoodbank.co.uk](http://www.calnefoodbank.co.uk)  
They are currently asking for:

Tinned tuna	Tinned meat	Tinned veg	Rice pudding	Custard	Biscuits
Tinned spaghetti		Treats	Cereal	Cereal Bars	

**Please make sure that any food donated is in date.**

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE FOODBANK HAS NOW MOVED TO 1 OXFORD ROAD**

## Christmas Card Tree



As in previous years we will have a branch in the foyer for you to place a Christmas card to our Church Family. This year we are going to send our donations for the cards you haven't sent to Action For Children and Doorway. You can make your donations by BACs or cheque made payable to Calne Methodist Church, making it clear that they are for the Christmas Card Tree, or you can put your cash donation in one of the envelopes in the basket.

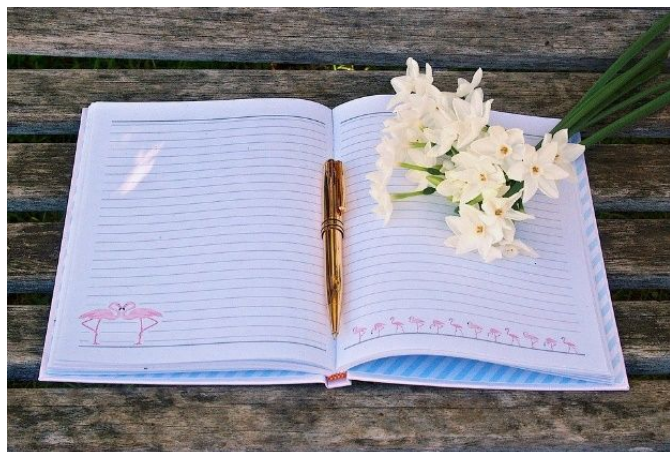


Hannah Legge (and Tim) are taking part in the 2024 London Marathon for Helen House, the link is below:  
[Helen and Douglas House: Hannah and Tims London Marathon Fundraising \(enthuse.com\)](http://enthuse.com)

This was the hospice that Amy-Rose spent a lot of time in as a young child and they cared for us as a family as well as Amy-Rose.

Robin Legge





## **Dates for your diary**

**All are very welcome to join in**

**Wednesday December 6th,  
13th, and 20th and January  
3rd 2024**

**Warm Spaces**

**Time: 10.00am - 4.00pm**

**Venue: Church Hall**

### **Wednesday 6th December**

**Christmas Spice and All Things Nice - Entertainment**

**Time: 7.30pm**

**Venue: Church**

**Admission Free -Donations to Charity Please**

### **Saturday 9th December**

**Christmas Wreath Making**

**Time: 10.30am**

**Venue: Church Hall**

**Cost £20**

### **Sunday 17th December**

**Carols by Candlelight Service**

**Time: 6.00pm**

**Venue: Church**

**Includes refreshments**

### **Wednesday 31st January**

**Police to Pulpit with Rev. Craig Manley**

**Time: 7.30pm**

**Venue: Church Hall**



**Christmas Spice  
and all  
Things nice**

**WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 6th 2023**

**CALNE METHODIST CHURCH**

**7.30PM**

**Be Entertained By**

**Singers - SupaNova and Juss 4 singing  
Instrumentalists - on organ, recorder and piano**

**Admission FREE**

**Your DONATIONS welcome  
towards our two nominated charities**

**Doorway Wiltshire Ltd.**

**A local charity for the homeless  
and  
Action for Children**

**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December**

**10.30am - Christmas Wreath Making.**



Join Lynda Rumming to learn how to make your own Christmas Wreaths for door and table decorations. Tickets: £20 including all materials - booking essential. Please contact Lynda Rumming if you wish to attend. Please bring additional foliage.



**Sunday**

**10th December**

**Calne Methodist Church**

**3.00pm - 6.00pm**

Join us for a Glitter and Glue Messy Christmas. Step into Christmas through crafts, games, songs, activities and food. A relaxed and informal church with a warm welcome suitable for everyone.

**No need to book - just come and join in!**

Children must be accompanied by an adult please.

A Calne Partnership of Churches activity



An informal church for all ages and all the family.  
Have fun and explore the Bible through crafts, songs,  
games, drama, activities and food.

**Sunday afternoons at Calne Methodist Church  
from 3.00pm - 6.00pm**

**Dates for 2024**

<b>14 January</b>	<b>14 July</b>
<b>11 February</b>	<b>No session in August</b>
<b>10 March</b>	<b>8 September</b>
<b>10 April</b>	<b>13 October</b>
<b>12 May</b>	<b>10 November</b>
<b>9 June</b>	<b>8 December</b>

**All are welcome - no need to book - come and join in!**

**A Calne Partnership of Churches activity**

Children must be accompanied by an adult please

For more information, contact Michele Gard on [calne.methodist.church@gmail.com](mailto:calne.methodist.church@gmail.com)

# NATIVITY JIGSAW FOR ADVENT



For advent there will be a jigsaw to complete at the rear of the church depicting the Nativity.

The aim is to complete it before the 24<sup>th</sup> December.

In many ways it's a metaphor for preparing for Christmas and getting all our pieces together to be ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Enjoy.

Derek 1/12

## **An Autumn Prayer**

**By Margaret Bassett**

Thank you for the autumn Lord

The beauty all around

For all the colours in the trees

And every sight and sound

Thanks you for the harvest Lord

The beauty you provide

Please help us share these gifts of life

With people far and wide

Thank you for the autumn sun

It helps our spirits climb

And for the beauty and the joy

We find at autumn time



This is a poem written 100-150 years ago, author unknown, and it was found in the Sunday School papers from the 1930s and 1940's in my home Methodist church, I thought people may find it interesting. Nothing like this seems to appear on the internet.

Robin Legge

Keep your pledge, boys

I want you to notice said Grandfather Grey  
To the two little boys who lived over the way  
That a man can never a drunkard be  
Who keeps from the poison cup totally free  
And never a drunkard was anywhere known  
But out of a moderate drinker he'd grown  
And so if you would never have the disgrace  
Of a staggering step and a bloated face  
Of a wretched home and a ruined soul  
Be sure not to touch the foaming browl  
Let it alone nor look with desire  
In the wine that is red, on the liquid fire  
Beware of the little now and then  
If you take it once, you will want it again  
To be safe from the curse there is only one way  
Be total abstainers said Grandfather Grey  
Yes Teetotal abstinence that is the rule  
We teach in the children's temperance school  
Stick to it boys and you will be free  
From the shame and the sin and the misery  
Of the drunkard's life and the drunkard's fate  
Hands up all and cry We'll keep it straight.



# **RINGS OF FIRE**

**CALLING ALL WHO LIKE TO HAVE A GO AT SOMETHING  
EXCITING**

## **Advanced Notice from Ursula**

**Friday May 17th and Saturday May 18<sup>th</sup> Performance of  
Rings of Fire**

**at Calne Methodist Church**

**Script and lyrics by E.Barham Music by A.M.Brind and G.Hird**

**Keeping up with the Olympic theme- Two people time-travel from the Greece of 500BC, sent to experience a vision of a future city where the sacred Games of the 681st Olympiad(1948) are to be held. Sadly they miss their destination and the time travellers have landed in the year 2024 Watch this space for a more detailed synopsis in the January Newsletter and details of the read through of the script to see if you would like to be involved - on stage or back stage.**



## **CHRISTMAS FUNNIES – FROM DEREK WITH LOVE**

- What is green, covered in Christmas lights and Christmas bulbs, and goes ribbit? A mistle-toad.
- What is every parent's favourite Christmas song? Silent Night!
- How did Joseph and Mary weigh baby Jesus at birth? They had a weigh in the manger.
- What did Adam say on the day before Christmas? It's Christmas, Eve!
- Why did the scarecrow get a big Christmas bonus? Because he was outstanding in his field.
- What did the bald man say when he got a comb for Christmas? "I'll never part with it!"
- What is a vegan's favourite Christmas carol? Soy to the World.
- What happened to the man who stole an Advent Calendar? He got 25 days!
- What do they sing at a snowman's birthday party? Freeze a jolly good fellow!
- What did the wise men say after they offered up their gifts of gold and frankincense? Wait, there's myrrh.
- What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire? Frostbite.
- What does Santa suffer from if he gets stuck in a chimney? Claus-trophobia!
- What do you call Santa when he stops moving? Santa Pause.
- What do snowmen eat for dessert? Ice crispies.
- What do you call an elf that runs away from Santa's workshop? A rebel without a Claus!
- What do you call a reindeer ghost? Cari-boo!
- What is it called when a snowman has a temper tantrum? A meltdown.
- What reindeer game do reindeer play at sleepovers? Truth or deer.
- What did Santa say when he stepped into a big puddle? It must have reindeer.
- What is Santa's dog's name? Santa Paws!
- Where do Santa's reindeer stop for coffee? Star-bucks!
- What's every elf's favourite type of music? Wrap!
- What's the absolute best Christmas present? A broken drum — you can't beat it!
- What happens if you eat Christmas decorations? You get tinsel-it is.



A Christmas Poem  
With apologies to Pam Ayres

I AM A CHRISTMAS TURKEY

I used to strut around the yard  
Me neck had such a curve  
But they said me days were numbered  
What a nerve

Me feathers were me lifelong friends  
They were so long and sleek  
But now they've all been plucked right out  
What a cheek

Me necks been wrung  
Me feets been strung  
And I've been hung  
All night

Me gobbling days are over----oh  
Discarded like some Teddy  
Me one and only job in life  
To be an oven ready

I've been in deep freeze storage  
A-waitin to be sold  
At last some housewife's picked me  
Cor, it weren't half cold

Stuffed with rotten old chestnuts  
Sausages under the chin  
Sewn up like an old cushion  
How did this custom begin?

Five hours in the oven  
Set up at Regulo 5  
I'm bastin in the Roastabag  
Aren't you glad you're still alive?

And now I'm on the meat tray  
The prongs they don't arf hurt  
I wish I was back in the farmyard  
A pecking at the dirt

Wiv roast spuds all around me  
And a ruffle round me feet  
Me drumsticks look so tasty  
You think I'm fit to eat

But watch out greedy humans  
When I get on your plate  
I'll cause such indigestion  
You'll wonder what you ate

Don't think it was the brussels  
And it wasn't just bad luck  
I'd have told you had you asked me  
You should have bought a duck!

VS Bailey

Thanks to Margaret Bassett for sharing this with us



This item was submitted to our Church Newsletter in November 1999 by Betty Brind (Ursula's Mum). Although it refers to the WI, I think it could equally be applied to our Church.

## A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

MENDLESHAM  
BY SUFFOLK W.I

### Make a Difference Pie

A firm base of continuity and experience filled with a blend of fellowship, facts and fun.

### INGREDIENTS

2-10 handfuls of members  
A few live wires  
Plenty of opportunities  
A programme full of variety  
A good helping of tolerance and goodwill  
A venue large enough for comfort.

### METHOD

Combine ingredients with care and tact. Mix well to develop friendships. Add members views for a smooth result. Spread with opportunities for learning and fun. Put in a measure of success for each member. Keep in a pleasant environment to mature. Finish with a generous dusting of the spice of life for a perfect result.

### SERVING SUGGESTION

To sample this most delicious pie  
Why don't you come to our W.I.  
We are sure you will find delights galore  
And just like Oliver, come back for more.

submitted by Betty Brind - 1999

