

CALNE METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2025



Items for future editions can be sent to:

Jan Sayers

The deadline for the December 2025 issue is

Sunday 30th November

I am sure that you all remembered to the clocks back last weekend.

Well, most of us did! I had retired to bed early evening so rose early, at 6-15 am. As I peacefully sat in darkened living room, along with my dog, munching on our morning toast, I became aware of the shower going and the movement upstairs at around 7 am. Elizabeth is reliant on smart watch technology not realising that you must programme to change to daylight saving time.

She entered the living room fully dressed clutching her sermon as she was preaching at Calne. She looked at me in astonishment telling me I was so late as I had not even dressed. In her mind it had gone nine o'clock, but as she looked at the wall and mantel clocks she came the slow realization, that technology had failed her. She felt really cheated out of enjoying that the extra hour in bed.

I think most of us may take some time to adjust to the lighter mornings and the dark afternoons.

I remember as a child walking home from school in the dark afternoons feeling the cold driving rain, and sometimes even snow. And November brings with it the smell of woodsmoke in the gardens. The smell of bonfires and fireworks which seem to last a full week rather than one day. The dark times of remembrance. The hope found in the journey towards Advent and the promise of the Christ child.

The changes we face in life often bring situations which require some adjustment, just as in daylight saving time. It is often a fact that our relationships with God can also change and fluctuate, as our challenges in life become evident.

As days shorten there are those in society who encounter changes in mental well-being so life becomes more difficult. For others, it will not be the changing clocks and reducing light. For some it may be financial struggles, of winter heating and light. The financial worry of Christmas. The anniversary of the death of a loved one. Ill health which makes the dark evenings darker still. The stress and busyness of work, or difficulties within a relationship. All these tend to bring darkness where previously there had been light.

Theologians have written about encountering God in the dark rather than the light. As we now are travelling towards the darkness of the winter season, I reflected that part of Psalm 139 reads, *If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light becomes night around me," Even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.* But for me the most comforting thought and promise, and the one which I hold on to is..... ***The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.*** *John 1:5*

The promise of Jesus Christ entering our world to save each one of us, holding on though the darkness of the cross to the light of the Easter morning. And it is always easy to remember the shining bright moments in life. Perhaps those times when we were very happy and contented, a holiday in the sunshine, events that brought wonder, and great joy.

But when we think of the darkest moments we endured in life, times of pain, and grief, those things we would much rather blot out, then the darkness

seems an apt illustration. Maybe you are experiencing such times at present and cry out, “*Where are you, God?*”

Modern living is full of ‘immediate and instant’ and we have an increasing number of automated machines and gadgets to make our lives easier just like Elizabeth’s smart watch. But it seems too many people are experiencing more stress and distress.

I believe that hope in God reminds us to be active towards God, to have faith. *May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace as we trust in him, so that we may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:13)*

Hope does not wait for the darkness to end, or for our suffering to be over.

Hope and faith in God are centred on the real presence of God being right here, right now. A presence, a light, that surprises us and touches us during our darkness, our solitude, our pain and our uncertainty.

Whether the changes of the clocks affect you or not, whether this season of darkness drawing in impacts you directly or not, we hold on to and pray that we may know and feel the presence of God, in both the days and nights that life brings.

I can feel the light of hope growing already, Christmas is coming!

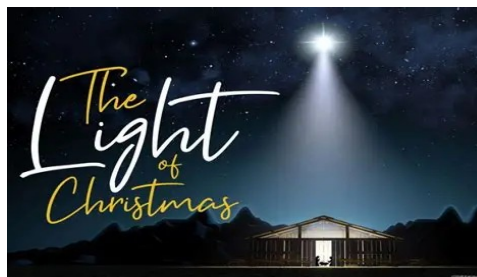
Bright Christmas Stars shine on high, Golden stars in the wintry sky;

Christmas candles in windows bright, Sends greetings into the night.

While in our hearts the Christmas flame, Glows with a love like His who came;

The infant Christ of lowly birth, to bring good will and peace to earth.

Hold on dear friends, go well, and go with God. **Craig**



Forthcoming Services:

2nd November	Rev Craig Manley including Holy Communion
9th November	Mr Derek Gard
16th November	Local Arrangement
23rd November	Rev Gerald England
30th November	Rev Craig Manley



Pastoral News

We are grateful to all those we have known and still know who have served or still serve in the armed forces particularly due to the instability of the world at present.

We pray for all those struggling due to the uncertainty of the cost of living; for those who have health issues and are receiving treatment; for those with Covid and suffering the after effects and for all the family members and friends who care and support them. We rejoice with those who have had successful operations and pray for continual healing.

Recently a request was made for more Pastoral Leaders. Julie responded to this calling. Her name was put forward to the Church Council Meeting in October and was accepted. We are very grateful to Julie. This means that there will be changes to the Pastoral Groupings of which you will be made aware.

Throughout November we particularly pray for all those who attend Messy Church. We give thanks for the work done across the Partnership of Churches and for all those who give of their time to prepare and deliver the Good News of Jesus Christ.

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.

In a quiet moment you may like to reflect on these words of a song by Estelle White:

O the love of the Lord is the essence of all that is here on earth,
All the beauty I see He has given to me and His giving is gentle as silence.
Every day, every hour, every moment

has been blessed by the strength of His love.
At the turn of each tide He is there at my side
and His touch is gentle as silence.
There have been times when I've turned from His presence,
and I've walked other paths, other ways;
but I've called on His name in the dark of my shame,
and His mercy was gentle as silence.

Calne Food Bank

Calne Food Bank – Please visit their website for details of their opening times -
www.calnefoodbank.co.uk



Dates for your diary

All are very welcome to come along and join in.

Tuesday 4th 11th 18th & 25th

Coffee and Chat

Time: 10.00am - 11.30am

Venue: Church Hall

Wednesday 5th 12th 19th & 26th Warm Spaces

Time: 10.00am - 4.00pm

Venue: Church Hall

Thursday November 6th

Exploring Your Faith

Time: 7.30pm - 9.00pm

Venue: Alan Bristow Room

Thursday November 20th and December 11th

CHAT (Come Hear and Talk) Ladies Group

Time: 2.00pm - 3.30pm

Venue: The Manse

Friday Evening November 14th 7.00pm

Saturday Afternoon November 15th 3.00pm

Production of 'Eclipse' about Herod's last days.

Venue: Methodist Church Contact Ursula for Tickets

Thursday November 20th

Pudding Night

Time: 7.00pm

Venue: The Church Hall

Thursday November 27th

Talk by Neil Parkinson - Working and Training with Police Dogs

Time: 7.30pm - 9.00pm

Venue: The Church Hall

Sunday November 30th

Sector Service and Advent Meal

Time: 10.30pm then 12.15pm

Venue: Church and then Church Hall

Saturday December 6th

Christmas Craft Fair

Time: 11.00pm till 2.00pm

Venue: Church and Church Hall



Refugee Prayer Focus November 2025

How hopeful things looked a few days ago; who knows how long peace will last? What will children think when they begin to grow? Let us pray that they will begin to think of peace as normal too.

Remembrance Sunday 9th November



Please note the service will start at 10.00am and pause at 10.40am to allow those who wish to go to the War memorial for the ceremony there. The service will continue led by Michele Gard.

This year I will be leading our remembrance service.

I find of all the services I lead; this Sunday is the one where I feel the most responsibility and concern for.

It's important to get the structure right, not to miss the two-minute silence, not to offend anyone with what I say, to give the service the respect it deserves.

I know from my own experience that I will be thinking of my own family. My grandfather who was wounded on the Somme, my father who was captured in the western desert, my uncle who survived being torpedoed in the Atlantic, my brother who served in the Royal Airforce for 40 years and my nephew who was deployed to Afghanistan.

Service and sacrifice are words we rarely use these days but when we consider remembrance those two words come to my mind.

It also reminds me that we follow a God whose son epitomised service and sacrifice and understands loss and pain.

I do hope you can join both of us on the 9th and we can remember together.

Derek Gard

My Boy Jack

At this time of year my thoughts turn to my dear old Dad, Bill Gard. He was born in 1917 and in 1938 joined the Royal Artillery. Later that year he sailed for India where he learnt to ride horses which pulled the guns.

Michele used to laugh because he said that he never had a day off or a holiday whilst in the army. Then he would show us his photo album which had pictures of him and his mates at various places in India in civies.

When the second world war started his unit was mechanized, given vehicles instead of horses and travelled over land to North Africa. He was immensely proud of being the first army mechanised unit to cross the Sind desert. He was shot at by tribesmen in Afghanistan. (A fact he shared with his grandson David who also served in Afghanistan, but much later) and signalled to gun boats on the Euphrates from the British embassy in Bagdad.

He did not speak about his time in the desert war until he was in his eighties. He was captured whilst surrounded by Germans in what was known as a box. He told of the fear of being shelled and because of the rocky service having nowhere to hide.

He spent the rest of the war in a Prison camp in Germany working everyday either in a quarry or a timber mill. (Only Officers did not have to work) When he returned to his hometown, Ilfracombe, he was welcomed by the Mayor and others at the railway station with a big banner saying, 'Welcome home Bill'. He found this difficult, as a professional soldier, he felt he had let the side down by being captured.

For many years after the war, he found Remembrance Sunday difficult. It was only in later life that he came to terms with his experiences, and especially at the VE day 50-year celebrations when he had tears running down his face as he marched through the local town with the old comrades and people clapped and cheered. He then began to share his wartime experience.

He was a gentleman and very moral and I miss him a lot.

He loved poetry. One of his favourite poets was Kipling. (not very correct now because of his colonial past)

I have selected the poem "My Boy Jack".

"My Boy Jack" is a 1916 poem by Rudyard Kipling. Kipling wrote it for Jack Cornwell, the 16-year-old youngest recipient of the Victoria Cross who stayed by his post on board ship during the battle of Jutland until he died. Kipling's son John was never referred to as "Jack".

"Have you news of my boy Jack?"
Not this tide.

"When d'you think that he'll come back?"
Not with this wind blowing, and this tide.

"Has any one else had word of him?"
Not this tide.
For what is sunk will hardly swim,
Not with this wind blowing, and this tide.

"Oh, dear, what comfort can I find?"
None this tide,
Nor any tide,
Except he did not shame his kind—
Not even with that wind blowing, and that tide.

Then hold your head up all the more,
This tide,
And every tide;
Because he was the son you bore,
And gave to that wind blowing and that tide!

Derek Gard



**Sunday
9th November**

**Calne Methodist Church
3.00pm – 6.00pm**

A relaxed and informal church with a warm welcome for everyone. Crafts, songs, games and a chance to make a mess and enjoy tea together.

No need to book – just come and join in!

Children must be accompanied by an adult please.

A Calne Partnership of Churches activity

Advent and Christmas Theme 2025

We are using the Methodist Church theme this year.



'Gifted' will remind people of their inherent worth and beauty – not because of what they've done, or what they can give – but because of who they are.

Gifted:

- is for everyone in our churches and beyond: both believers rejoicing at God's gift of Jesus, and those who might find the season more wearying than wonderful.
- reaches out to people longing for transformation but feeling stuck. For those searching for something more, something real – but unsure where to look.

Gifted is the Methodist Church's open invitation, speaking the good news to people that they matter. That they are Beloved. Created with infinite care. A gift to the world, just as they are.

Date	Leader	Weekly Theme	Object
30 November Sector Service followed by Advent Meal	Rev Craig Manley	You are a Gift	
7 December	Worship Leaders and Choir	The Orange in the Stocking	

14 December Includes Holy Communion	Rev Roy Fowler	Give Hope	
21 December	Derek Gard	With love from God	
25 December 10.00am	Michele Gard	The Best Gift	

AUTUMN PROGRAMME AT CHURCH

6 th November	Exploring your Faith Week 6
9 th November	Messy Church 3.00pm
14 th November	Eclipse play 7.00pm
15 th November	Eclipse play 3.00pm
20 th November	Pudding night. 7.00pm
27 th November Dog. officer	Talk. Working and training with a Police With Neil Parkinson Retired police
29 th November	Calne Christmas lights turn on.
30 th November	Advent Meal
14 th December	Messy Church 3.00pm

More details to follow in the Church Magazine and Notices.

MOLLY'S PUDDING NIGHT –
THURSDAY 20th NOVEMBER 7.30pm



Back by popular demand

Forget the diet, don't worry about the waist measurement,

There's never too much sugar, cream, custard, ice cream!

For one night only indulge yourself on this feast of puddings.

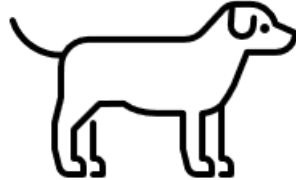
Please put your name on the notice board in the hall if you will be attending.

Donations on the night in aid of church funds.

Also, if you can provide a pudding for the night to share with others please speak to Molly or Derek. They would be most grateful.

Derek 28/10

My Life Working with and Training Police Dogs



A Talk by Neil Parkinson

**Thursday 27th November 7.30pm Calne
Methodist Church Hall**

Neil, an attendee at our Warm/Friendly Spaces day, worked and trained for many years with Police Dogs. Come along to this interesting talk, refreshments provided.

Donations on the night for church funds.

Derek 28/10

CALNE METHODIST
CHURCH ~ ~ ~ PRESENTS

Music!



SUPANOVA AND

Silver street



Drama!

Silver street players performing

ECLIPSE by Edward barham

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 14th 7.00pm

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 15th 3.00pm

enjoy wonderful entertainment and
delicious refreshments

Tickets:- Adults £8. Children Free

Proceeds to Cancer Research and Church Funds

Cahoots

I have been in many places, but I've never been in Cahoots. Apparently, you can't go alone. You have to be in Cahoots with someone.

I've also never been in Cognito. I hear no one recognises you there.

I have, however, been in Sane. They don't have an airport; you have to be driven there. I have made several trips there, thanks to my friends, family and work.

I would like to go to Conclusions, but you have to jump, and I'm not too much on physical activity anymore.

I have also been in Doubt. That is a sad place to go, and I try not to visit there too often.

I've been in Flexible, but only when it was very important to stand firm.

Life is too short for negative drama & petty things. So laugh insanely, love truly and forgive quickly!

From one unstable person to another... I hope everyone is happy in your head - we're all doing pretty good in mine!

Barry Gard

The Third Calne Methodist Church Poetry Event

Saturday, October 4th, 2:30-4:30 pm

How it went

There were several changes for this event. It was on a Saturday afternoon, not weekday evenings as before; we hoped a poetry 'Book Swap' would work; we added a poetry quiz with 'prizes'; and we invited anyone to bring a poem they wanted to read. And overall, it was a great success: £165.00 was raised for the church.

Some of the audience read their chosen poems, complementing our regular presenters, and the mix was generally appreciated. The 'Book Swap' failed, but no one noticed! Afternoons were preferred in the very positive feedback we received. One person wrote, "I didn't want to come. But I'm glad I did."

The quiz was too hard (Top score 13/20), but it was fun, and because it was tables competing, it got people talking. Next Spring, it will be a lot easier.

The poetry? Old and new, serious and gleeful, people's own works and well-known classics – and the last one, which rhymed 'Vicars' with 'Knickers', sent everyone home chuckling. NB The Methodist Church has Ministers!



Advent Lunch

30th November 2025

12:15 In Church Hall

**Stuffed Turkey Roll*
with
Roast Potatoes & Vegetables
+
Christmas Pudding / Trifle
+
Tea/Coffee**

(* Vegetarian Option Available)

Sign-up sheet available in Church Hall early November

**** Please advise Caroline of any food allergies**



CHRISTMAS CRAFTS CAKES & COFFEE EVENT

**SATURDAY 6th DECEMBER, 2025
METHODIST CHURCH AND HALL
SILVER STREET, CALNE
11.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m.**

**CRAFT STALLS,
HOMEMADE CAKES & MORE.
FAIRLY TRADED TEA & COFFEE
REFRESHMENTS**



**PLEASE SIGN UP IN THE HALL IF YOU CAN PROVIDE A CAKE OR HELP
ON THE DAY. WE ARE ALSO LOOKING FOR DONATIONS FOR THE
TOIMBOLA**