

CALNE METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2026



Items for future editions can be sent to:

Jan Sayers

The deadline for the February 2026 issue is
Sunday 25th January



Do you ever have one of those days when it is simply better to stay in bed?

Life is always going to be one of adjustments. When we first entered ministry, it was difficult adjusting to the ways of rural living. Things we had on 'tap' in the city were no longer evident, without careful planning and foresight. We encountered badgers, and rabbits, both creating havoc in the gardens, rats on the bird table, and mice in the manse. We adapted and adjusted, deployed counter measures and things returned to a degree of normality, excepting all the constant building noise which seems to have surrounded us for the last 15 years.

During the Covid lockdowns, with the shops closing and buildings standing empty, the 'Rodentia' populations were multiplying in safety and seclusion. As the restaurants, pubs and fast-food outlets, were closing or on vastly reduced productivity, the result was various species searching out *new* food sources which brought them into people's homes more than was usual.

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I arose with Dizzy, my dog at the time, as usual about 6-30 am and was confronted by a drowned mouse in her water bowl. This was the last straw for Dizzy, looking disgusted she returned to her bed to let the breaking of a new day commence without her. (See picture above)

Now the purpose of this tale is that we all have to adapt and adjust on a daily basis, and to all manner of situations and challenges. We do so by being underpinned by the faith and hope that we find in God.

This year and especially in recent months I have observed that basic human decency and kindness seem to be much more prevalent, perhaps due to the state of our world which seems to be forever in conflict.

Even in the worst of times, life goes on. Most crisis eventually will pass and as a society and church we must find hope in lessons we have learnt

from the past. To care for each other in the present and look towards how we may progress together in the future.

History has repeatedly shown that people are more open to religion during times of crisis and instability. We can all empathize and relate to lost and confused hearts looking for answers. Our warm spaces outreach has shown us that. It is clear for all of us, that regardless of how much we plan, strategize, and think ahead, we cannot control what happens to us and around us. As we look at the constant news feeds of a fast-paced society living ever more in the realms of social media, steaming and AI, we are extremely limited in what we can do. We might even feel as if we have lost control. That is a very natural response in these unprecedented times.

To step into the peace that God calls us to, is to actively let go of control, and to put life into God's hands. To create space in our lives for God to restore and revitalize each one of us, and I know this from personal experience.

It is in times like these, when our faith is challenged, that we are more likely to grow in faith, if we hold fast. God is love, and love never fails, even in the darkest moments, for love gives hope. Love compels us to hold fast *together*.

Now, more than ever before, our future is bound together tightly, holding fast in hope. As we pray, we are united as one family. So, let us pause collectively and find the peace, love, and hope given by God.

*'For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, **nor things present, nor things to come...** will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.'* [Romans 8:38-39](#)

Hold fast in that promise dear friends.

Stay safe and well and may God go with you. And a very happy, healthy and peaceful New year.

Craig



Forthcoming Services:

4th January Rev Craig Manley – this will be our Covenant Service and will include Holy Communion.

11th January Mr Eric Clifford

18th January Mrs Elizabeth Manley – from this service until 8th March we will be worshipping in the hall.

**25th January A Local Arrangement
6.00pm Partnership Churches Service at St Mary's**

Calne Food Bank

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



Refugee Prayer Focus January 2026

Lord Jesus,

You were once a refugee, carried to safety by Mary and Joseph.
Teach us to see Your face in those who arrive at our shores and cities.
Break down walls of fear and indifference,
and fill our communities with generosity, welcome, and grace.
May we be Your hands and feet to those in need.
Amen.



Pastoral News

Happy New Year to Everyone.
May you know Love, Joy, Peace
and Hope throughout 2026

We thank everyone who placed
cards on the Christmas Card
Tree in the vestibule sending you
all thoughtful messages.

We pray for: all who are involved in education in any way as the new term starts; those who have long term health issues and for those who care for and support them; those who are waiting for test results and consultations; those who are recovering from operations; and those who are caring for elderly family members.

Throughout January we particularly pray for Eleanor Bujalska's pastoral group: Pauline Appleby, Yvonne Brett, Caroline Foster, Michele and Derek Gard, Jill McCondach, Maisie Price, Jan and Rob Sayers, Ruth Whittard, Angus and family, Mitty and family.

As part of our Christian commitment is to care for and support each other I ask that if you have any Joys or Sorrows that can be shared in our pastoral news please let me know. Thank you. Ursula



January 2026

Dates for your diary

All are very welcome to come along and join in.

Tuesday 6th 13th 20th & 27th Coffee and Chat

Time: 10.00am - 11.30am

Venue: Church Hall

Wednesday 7th 14th 21st 28th Warm Spaces

Time: 10.00am - 4.00pm

Venue: Church Hall

Thursday January 8th and 29th and February 19th

CHAT (Come Hear and Talk)

Ladies Group

Time: 2.00pm - 3.30pm

Venue: The Manse

Sunday January 18th

Partnership Service

Time: 6.00pm

Venue: St Mary's Parish Church

Saturday January 24th

Partnership Quiet Day

See weekly notices for more details

Saturday April 18th

Calne Spring Sing

More details coming soon

Friday and Saturday April 24th and 25th

Production of Jonah Man Jazz with Heddington School Choir

Venue: Calne Methodist Church



Sunday
11th January

**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

Whatever Comes This Year

Whatever lies ahead this year
I face with faith instead of fear
For God my Shepherd guides my way
And walks beside me day by day.

Whatever blessings bring delight
Will be reflections of God's light,
And I'll rejoice and look for ways
To lift my heart in thankful praise.

Whatever sorrows pierce my soul,
Whatever billows o'er me roll,
I'll trust God's grace will see me through
With strength to cling to what is true.

Whatever needs I have I'll bring
In trusting prayer before my King,
And then I'll watch Him work for me
To thank Him for eternity.

Whatever else I find to do,
I'll search God's Word and read it through;
I'll seek to learn about His love
And set my heart on things above.

Whatever comes, whatever goes,
I'll trust the One who sees and knows.
Lord, help me walk with You this year
In faith and hope and love sincere.

Christina Joy Hommes

Submitted by Derek Gard

A BIG THANKYOU FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

I just wanted to thank everyone for the wonderful series of services during Advent.

We started with the first Sunday in Advent, with 82 people attending the service and 72 staying for Lunch. A huge thankyou to Caroline and Julie for the lunch and for all who helped.

The series of services about Gifts was based on the Methodist church worship resources, This Advent and Christmas season, the Methodist Church invited us to join 'Gifted' with resources to support us. *Gifted* is a message of good news to a weary world.

We were truly blessed with all the people that made this possible, our worship team, local preachers and our Minister.

You add into this the wonderful music from the Choir and others, those who decorated the church, the wonderful flowers, especially the advent crown and the magnificent centre piece. Our stewarding team who prepares the worship space for every Sunday, the people on the door, those doing the coffee after the service. The Zoom and sound team who make it possible for people who can't get to church to feel part of our community.

I haven't named people because I didn't want to leave anyone out, but you and they know who they are.

All this work made the Carol and Christmas services such special events.

We have been truly blessed by God and each other during this time, and it bodes well for the celebrations in 2026 for our 150th anniversary.

God bless.

Derek

A Prayer Poem

In the moontime of the winter,
when the sun redly rises;
in the moontime of the winter,
when the trees starkly stretch,
then, O Christ, you come:
softly as a gently falling snowflake,
With the lusty energy of a newborn boy,
the blood and pain of your coming,
staining the distant horizon.

In the frost of the starlight,
when the sun gives way to moon,
in the frost of the starlight,
when the earth is turned to stone,
then, O Christ, you come:
slowly as the rhythm of the seasons,
quickly as the rush of cradling waters,
worshipped by the wise,
adored by the humble,
the ecstatic joy of your coming,
heralding songs of peace.

Into the world of refugee and soldier,
the soles of your feet have touched the ground.
Into the world of banker and beggar,
the soles of your feet have touched the ground.
Into the world of Jew and Arab,
the soles of your feet have touched the ground.

Walk with us saviour of the poor,
be a light on our way,
travel beside the weary
fill the broken hearted with hope,
and heal the nations,
that all may walk
in the light of the glory of God.

Taken from '50 Great Prayers' of the Iona Community

Submitted by Ursula Barham

NEW YEAR JOKES – BAD ONES.

- **What is a New Year's resolution?**
Something that goes in one year and out the other.
- **What did the little champagne bottle call his father?**
Pop!
- **Did you hear about the guy who started fixing breakfast at midnight on Dec. 31?**
He wanted to make a New Year's toast.
- **Why did the man sprinkle sugar on his pillow on New Year's Eve?**
He wanted to start the year with sweet dreams.
- **Why should you put your new calendar in the freezer?**
To start off the New Year in a cool way.
- **What do you tell someone you didn't see on New Year's Eve?**
I haven't seen you for a year!
- **What happened to the man who shoplifted a calendar on New Year's Eve?**
He got 12 months!
- **What did Adam say to Eve on Dec. 31?**
It's New Year's, Eve.
- **Why was the telephone late for work on Jan. 1?**
It was busy ringing in the new year!
- **What compliment did the drink glass give to the champagne on New Year's Eve?**
"You're so bubbly!"
- **Why did the man stand on one leg at midnight on New Year's?**
He wanted to start the year on the right foot.
- **What did the woman say when she was offered a raisin on New Year's Eve?**
"No thanks. I already have a date."
- **Why do birds fly south for New Year's Eve?**
Because it's too far to walk.