



St Andrew's Trinity E-News



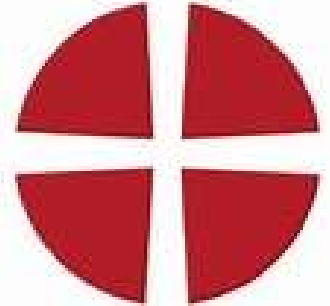
Issue 10 / 24 Trinity's email: trinity@basingstokecircuit.net Dec 24 / Jan 25



**Our Minister is:
Revd Claire Simpson**

email:
revclaire72@btinternet.com

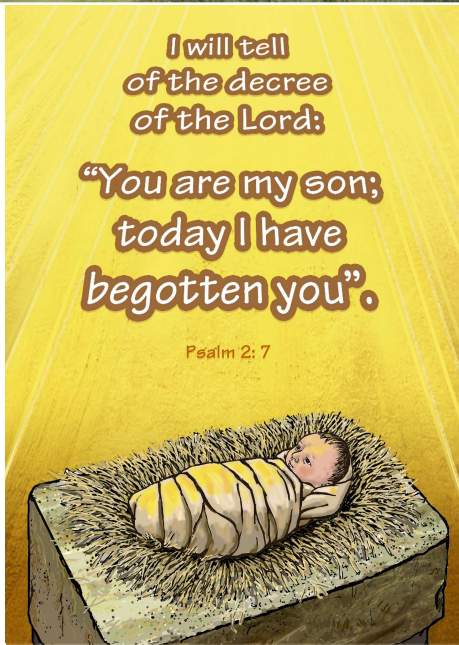
**NOT Contactable
During Jan & Feb 25**



St Andrew's Trinity have merged & all worship at St Andrew's Trinity Church, South Ham, Basingstoke.

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**St Andrew's Trinity
E-News: Deadline for:
February 25 Issue:
Fri 17 January 2025**

I love receiving all your items, so please keep them coming & **thankyou** to everyone who sends in items. They can be phoned, posted, emailed or given to me. **Thankyou, Hazel, Ed**
(☎: 01256-461375) email:
hazel@basingstokecircuit.net

16B Portacre Rise, B/Stoke,
RG218YQ

Link: Circuit Website:
www.bhbcircuit.org.uk



**Part of Berkshire & Hampshire
Borders Methodist Circuit**

December 2024 & January 2025

Dear friends,

How good is your hearing? Maybe you can hear well? Maybe you wear hearing aids which means that you can hear well? Or maybe, as you've become more mature in years you feel that your hearing is not so good, even with some extra help. In later life, my dad struggled with his hearing and needed to wear hearing aids. He didn't find it easy to wear them and, at times, he found that noise and chatter could become quite distorted. So much so, that at family get-togethers when the four boy grandchildren were in attendance, my dad would ceremonially take out both hearing aids and lay them on the table because the noise in the house would be a bit too much for him! On a more serious note, I know that a common problem for those with hearing difficulties is the amount of background noise that might be going on when trying to focus on an individual conversation or voice.

If any of this resonates with you then you might be drawn to the Methodist Church's Christmas campaign which this year is called 'Hush the Noise'. The following explanation says: 'Christmas is loud, isn't it? So much expectation. So many voices. Telling us how to celebrate, what to wear, what to eat and drink, what to watch and what to buy. Instead, this Christmas we're inviting everyone to hush the noise. To listen for the love song that

Angels bring, this and every year. They sang it the first time more than 2,000 years ago, on the midnight clear. *They're just waiting for us to join in.'*

So, that is the challenge for us as December begins. To find space and time and moments of quiet refreshment that means we can hear what God might be saying to us as we prepare for the birth of Jesus. There are plenty of opportunities in the life of our church to find that space and time amidst all the louder celebrations, and you are warmly invited to come along and join in. A lot of the Advent and Christmas activities are advertised in more detail in this magazine - do take a look. All are welcome.

I want to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy Christmas and peaceful new year. As 2025 begins I am on sabbatical and so will be unavailable for three months until the start of April. My good wishes to you all for this time and I look forward to catching up with folk again just before Easter.

With Love

Claire

***We wish you all a very
Happy, Joyful & Peaceful
Christmas and New
Year, e-news team.***



A new name for our church community

On Monday 18th November, the Church Council met and after a time of sharing and discussion, we voted on a new name for our church community.

The name proposed and seconded was '**St Andrew's Trinity Methodist Church**' and by a show of hands, 16 people voted in favour, 3 voted against, and there were 2 abstentions. So, this proposal was clearly carried.

As I'm sure you are aware, it has taken time, prayer and much discernment to get us to this point. As a Church Council we know that this has been a difficult issue to resolve. Many different views have been expressed and there was a time when we accepted that there was no consensus. However, as Church Council we resolved that now was the time to make a decision to enable us to move forward into the future as a new church community shaped for mission. My hope and prayer is that we are able to do this, trusting God and one another. I am deeply thankful for all the members of our church community and for all that we are seeking to do together. The best of all is God is with us, and all of us are invited to join in the mission that God is opening up before us.

I am grateful to Angela Webb who has written the following prayer for the next stage of our journey together:

Gracious and Generous God,

As we embrace our new name,
May we know that we are held
Secure in your enfolding love.

May we gradually let go of
And place into your hands,
All that holds us back.
May we receive your healing and peace.

As we move forward,
May our eyes be open to see
Where you are at work
In the neighbourhood we seek to serve.

As we continue to become
The loving Christ-centred
Community

You call us to be,
May our hearts be open to discern
Our part in your Mission.

In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

With love,

Claire



Our Minister is: Revd Claire Simpson

**Sunday Worship at St Andrew's Trinity
and our Basingstoke Churches –
Plan for Worship: Dec 24 & Jan & Feb 25**



Enquiries – Joint Senior Stewards:

Diane Bath ☎: 01256 320429 or email dianeath51@gmail.com

Linda Hoe ☎: 01256 417219 or email lindahoe@hotmail.co.uk

Berkshire & Hampshire Borders Circuit Plan, December 2024 (B/Stoke Churches)

Dates	1 Dec Advent	8 Dec	15 Dec	22 Dec	29 Dec
St Andrew's Trinity 10.30 am	Rev Claire Simpson, HC	Rev John Banks	Carol Service	LA St Andrew's Trinity Christmas Services – SEE BELOW	No Service
Church of L Stream 10.30 am	Mr John Smith	Mr Nick Klingaman	Mr Symon Turner	LA, Carols	Rev Claire Simpson
Oakley 10.30 am	LA	Mr Peter Frank	Rev Claire Simpson, HC	LA, Carols	Helen Watson (LP)
Oakridge 10.30 am 4.30 pm	LA	Rev Claire Simpson, HC, United Service	Mrs Paddy Jose LA, Carols	Rev D Cook	Mr John Smith
Old Basing 10.30 am	Mr Peter Frank	United at Oakridge	LA, Carols	Rev Claire Simpson, HC	Rev Jeongsok Kim

Christmas Services at St Andrew's Trinity

- | | |
|---|--|
| • (Tuesday 24 Dec 2024,
Christmas Eve | • 4 pm Christingle Service, led by JAM
• 5.30 pm Communion Service, led by Rev Claire Simpson |
| • Wednesday 25 Dec 2024,
Christmas Day | • 10 am Christmas Morning Worship led by Rev Barbara McIntivey |

Berkshire & Hampshire Borders Circuit Plan, January 2025 (B/Stoke Churches)

Dates	5 Jan	12 Jan	19 Jan	26 Jan
St Andrew's Trinity 10.30 am	Rev Barbara McIntivey, HC, Cov	Mrs Linda Hoe, Parade	LA	Mr Terry Rowell
Church of L Stream 10.30 am	Mrs Sarah Whithorn	Mr Jonathan Skeet	Rev Dr James Mather	LA
Oakley 10.30 am	Mrs Rosie Greenhaigh	Mr Terry Rowell	Rev David Jenkins, HC, Cov	LA
Oakridge 10.30 am	United at Old Basing	Rev Cook, HC	Mrs Linda Hoe	LA
Old Basing 10.30 am	LA, United Service	Mr Chris Marsh, Cov	Mrs Sarah Whithorn	Rev Barbara McIntivey, HC

Berkshire & Hampshire Borders Circuit Plan, February 2025 (B/Stoke Churches)

Dates	2 Feb	9 Feb	16 Feb	23 Feb
St Andrew's Trinity 10.30 am	Mrs Anne Rowe	Rev Andy Fitchet, HC	Mr Chris Marsh	LA
Church of Liv Stream 10.30 am	Prof Tony Bell	Mr Peter Frank	Mr David Munns	LA
Oakley 10.30 am	Mr Chris Marsh	Mr Terry Rowell	Rev Dr Ruth Midcalf, HC	LA
Oakridge 10.30 am	Mr David Munns	Rev D Cook, HC	LA	Rev Andy Fitchet
Old Basing 10.30 am	LA	Mr Symon Turner	Mrs Linda Hoe	Rev Barbara McIntivey, HC

Advent

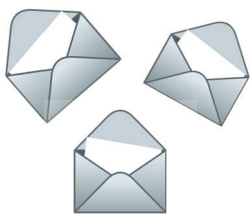
During Advent there will be a large Christmas card available each Sunday, which you are invited to sign as a Christmas greeting to your church friends.

There will be envelopes available to donate what you would have spent on individual cards, please hand these to a church steward.

Our donations, together with those given in retiring collections during the season, will be divided equally between 'Action For Children' and 'Mission Aviation Fellowship' (MAF).

Thank you for your support for these worthy charities.

Ann Walker



**Save
the
Date**



Christmas Community Lunch Saturday 14 December at 1 pm

**St Andrew's Trinity
Methodist Church**

**Traditional Christmas Lunch with
Vegetarian Option
followed by Christmas Pudding or
Cheese & Biscuits &
Coffee / Tea with Mince Pies**

**Entry by ticket: these can be
obtained after Church on Sundays
and during Mug & Biscuit
opening hours.**

**Closing date for tickets is:
Sunday 8 December**

A Prayer Request Book

Is available each Sunday and prayers will be included in the 'Intercessions'. Please ensure you have permission from the person you would like prayed for.

Diane Bath



Christmas

My Mum loved Christmas, and she was expert at it. She loved the colours, the music, the carols, the food, the laughter, the stockings. and family.

She was as far removed from Charles Dickens' character Scrooge, as it is possible to be.

She came from the slums of Portsmouth, worked 'in service' married a Londoner, and stayed in the city, for the rest of her life. At Christmas time, it was we three, Dad, Mum, and me. Mum went into Christmas, with great enthusiasm. She decorated the flat where we lived, with paper chains and balloons. It was just after WW2, money was scarce. I had returned from evacuation, and having been bombed out, my parents had a new council flat. Nothing posh. But we were safe and happy.

Mum made Christmas cake on the elderly stove we had in the kitchen. She never measured the ingredients, she just knew. She made Christmas pudding too, inside there was always the chance of a coin, sixpence, or a thruppenny bit, placed secretly after the cooking. After the food was finished, there would be games.

My parents owned a bagatelle board. This was not the modern type with a spring, it had a wooden stick to push the metal balls around, and hopefully get the score you wanted. I still have the board, and it is a tradition in my family, to play every Christmas. We even have a Bagatelle Cup, and a wooden spoon award. Mum was blessed with a wonderful sense of humour, and optimism, and Christmas was the time she showed her love. My Dad smiling, quietly supporting her.

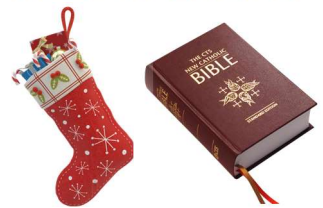
Christmas has changed, but it is still about love, God's love for each one of us. As I look for presents, I know the simplest gifts are the best. My eldest son lives in Spain with his wife. This year I am giving him his Dad's Bible. I have placed the marker ribbons, in places of blessing for him. Places of assurance of God's love and protection.

Thank God for those we have loved, for those we love now, for those we will love in the future, and those who will find his love through us.

God bless you.

Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

Margaret Garland



Peggy's Coffee Morning on Saturday 9 November

for the Basingstoke Hospice raised
£420 - well done and thank you to
everyone who supported us in any way.

- 40 years ago, on 31 December 1984 the Bank of England stopped producing one pound notes. They remained legal tender until 1988.

Sunday Car Parking

I am looking into the problem of parking at Church for Sunday Worship. Most roads adjacent to the church do not have yellow lines.

For those who are severely affected I have a solution so please see me personally.

Bob Lock



Journeys of Imagination

THE BIRTH

The cold wind hit me like a sledgehammer as I stepped outside the door and looked around. After the warmth of the cattle shed, and the sweat and blood of the birth, after the pungent smell of idling cattle and damp straw, I needed some fresh air – and now I'd got it with a vengeance.

The chill wind that I'd barely noticed inside the creaking barn cut through me, and I pulled my coat tighter round me. The midwife, none too pleased at being called out at that time of night, had come and gone, and the innkeeper had long since returned to look after his other guests.

It was a clear night; as cold nights often are. No trace of clouds to be seen anywhere – just a carpet of stars arching across the sky. And one, I could see, far brighter than the others. Back at home, I had often looked up to the night sky, to trace the shapes and patterns in the formation of the stars, but I had never seen this one before, outshining everything else, shouting to the sleeping world to pay attention, to gaze on it and see God's greatness there.

And then I saw them coming. Men from the hills. Noisy and excited. I paid no attention at first. Just revellers, I thought, making their way home after an evening in the town. But no. As they came closer, I could see – and smell – that they were shepherds. And they were talking, shouting, to each other and to anyone who would listen. And I clearly heard the word "baby" drifting across on that chill wind.

Something special was happening..... I was still puzzled, unable to make it all out. But I did remember Mary's words all those months ago, when she tried to explain what was happening. And I suddenly had one of those strange feelings that you get now and again: you know what I mean? A feeling that God was very present in His world ... and that I too was standing in His presence.

I glanced up at the skies once more, so bright, so crystal cold, and again pulled my coat around me before going back in to my wife, and to that tiny fragile piece of humanity who it seemed, could even bring stars to his cradle.

*Joseph of Nazareth,
Inn stables, Bethlehem, Judea,
Year 43 Emperor Caesar Augustus (Year of Census)*

Author unknown (sent in by Martin Frost)

We've been unable to find anyone that this has been attributed to.

* * * * *



Enjoy 'Fellowship & Refreshments' after Morning Worship.

Our Thanks to all who serve refreshments Sundays and weekdays in the 'Mug & Biscuit'.



(More Volunteers are always very welcome, Sundays or weekdays, if you can help, please have a word with Linda, thank you).



- **Christmas Cards** are now available in the Mug & Biscuit during opening hours.



- **There will be a 'Sonrise Bookstall' after Church** on the following **Sundays: 8 December, 23 February & 30 March** selling Christmas Cards, Books and more. Books, daily readings etc **can be ordered, see Linda.**



- 60 years ago, on 31 December 1964 Donald Campbell broke the world water speed record, and became the only person to break both the land speed record and the water speed record in the same year.

A Christmas Medley Thursday 19 December 2 pm at St Andrew's Trinity

A warm invitation to you to join us for a
'Christmas Medley' on
Thursday 19 December, 2pm

There will be music, carols to sing, poems, readings etc and refreshments after.

We hope to see you there,
Everyone is very welcome.



Diane Bath



What a Busy Weekend

On **Saturday 19 October** we held a double baptism for Harry and Danielle, it was a joyous occasion with a family feast.

On **Sunday 20 October** our Minister, Claire, led our service and afterwards we had the Church's AGM.

On **Monday 21 October**, Limington House held their Harvest Service. One hundred special children, teachers, helpers, parents and grandparents. We were led by the Head of the School, Justin, and each child took part showing us their work and each class received rapturous applause.

It was lovely to see a very full church and the Macaton Choir were fabulous. Macaton is the sign language they use. Claire thanked them and blessed them on their way. Many of the children are in wheelchairs, walkers etc and they all walked back to school.

I'm looking forward to their Christmas service.
Thank you Justin and staff.

Peggy Wood

A Poem for the Hungry

Christmas time is here again,
"Will anyone remember"
The tree has been decorated,

"But what brightness
have they"

Parcels wrapped
beneath the tree,

"But what will they receive"

Turkey browning nicely,

"What will they eat"

Can we open our
presents now?

"But what presents have they"

Can we give them a present?

"Yes we can give them life"

Written by Jenny Leighton

* * * * *

A new opportunity for informal worship



All are welcome to join us on

Sunday 9th February 2025

At 5pm

in St Andrew's Methodist Church,
Basingstoke for
soup and cake in the Mug and Biscuit
followed by

“LOVE ONE ANOTHER”

At 6pm Worship in an relaxed atmosphere

A chance to... share in conversation,
Join together in singing and prayer,
And explore faith in a creative way.

Welcome

Welcome, Jesus baby
To a world that is waiting,
Welcome, Jesus baby
To a world needing joy,
Thank you for the
presents
That you bring us on your
birth day,
Peace, love and hope
Wrapped in one baby boy.
by Daphne Kitching, PP

* * * * *

Love is what's in
the room with you
at Christmas
if you stop opening
presents for a
minute and
look around – *Anon*

* * * * *

The world provides
enough for every
man's need but not
for every man's
greed – *Gandhi*

* * * * *

Care Home Ministry in Basingstoke

Events planned for December 2024

Our Care Home Ministry is going really well, with regular visits to Ashcombe House, Oakridge House & St Thomas'.

We currently have a **Communion Service** and **Carol Services** planned as listed below:

- **Thursday 5 December**
Ashcombe House
Christmas Communion Service at 11 am
- **Thursday 19 December**
Ashcombe House Nativity Carol Service at 11 am
- **Friday 20 December**
Oakridge House Nativity Carol Service at 2.30 pm

If you are able to come to any, or all (*ever hopeful Marianne!!*) of the events listed above, please let Marianne or Christine know. We need quite a lot of people for the Nativity Carol Services including some singers, so do please consider joining us.

Looking forward to hearing from you!

Marianne Sales:
MarianneBunn1610@hotmail.com
Christine Embleton:
chris.embleton1@btinternet.com



'A Bit of Peace and Quiet'



All are welcome to join us on

Thursday 20th February
at St Andrew's Methodist Church,
Basingstoke
for

"Our Amazing Hands"

We will gather between 1pm and 1.30pm

From 1.30 to 3.30pm we will reflect on how we use our hands and how Jesus used his hands by looking at art and exploring creativity.

A taste of a Silchester Retreat Day

Whose Promised Land? The Continuing Conflict over Israel & Palestine

**by Colin Chapman,
SPCK, £16.99 (revised
& expanded edition)**

The conflict between Israel and the Palestinians has profoundly affected the Middle East for almost 80 years, and shows no sign of ending.

With two peoples claiming the same piece of land for different reasons, it remains a huge political and humanitarian problem.

Can it ever be resolved? If so, how? These are the basic questions addressed in this revised and expanded sixth edition of Colin Chapman's highly acclaimed book.

Having lived and worked in the Middle East at various times since 1968, Chapman explains the roots of the problem and outlines the arguments of the main parties involved.

He also explores the theme of land in the Old and New Testaments, discussing legitimate and illegitimate ways of using the Bible in relation to the conflict.

This new and fully updated edition covers developments over the past ten years, including the war that broke out between Israel and Hamas in October 2023.

(PP)



NEW – BDBC Budget Consultation (from OneChurch)

You may recognise the photo of Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council offices. You may be

wondering why I have chosen that image to launch this edition of the news update. Quite simply, Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council has launched a public consultation on budget proposals that set out how it plans to fund its services for the next year from April 2025. This is an opportunity for everyone who lives in the Borough to influence the funding decisions for the year 2025/6. Please encourage those you know to participate in this consultation, which runs until **Friday 3 January 2025**, by visiting: www.basingstoke.gov.uk/budget2025

Zac in Basingstoke in 2025

Do you sing? Play an instrument? Want a challenging but rewarding day on 7th June 2025?

If you remember seeing or taking part in "Wildfire" (about Pentecost), "3 Camels" (about the Magi), or other Christian Music Ministries (CMM) musicals that we have put on, then you will be interested to hear that we are working with CMM to present "Zac" at Christ Church in Chineham. Maybe you have come across Roger Jones and CMM musicals in other churches, or maybe this is something new.

Zac is a familiar gospel story with a different slant. Please book it in your diaries! If you are interested in singing, or playing an instrument, we would love you to join us. We are also looking for support people – everything from publicity to moving chairs – if you think you could help please let me know.

(A number of you have already contacted me... thank you – you do not need to tell me again!).

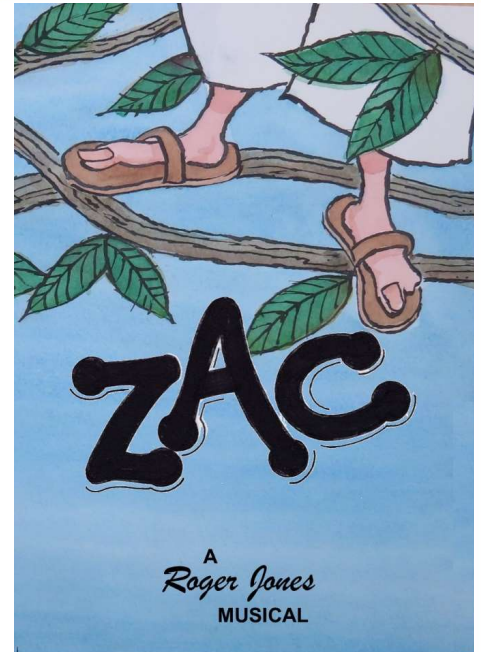
Or... just come along to the presentation in the afternoon, and get caught up in the story.

I have been involved in different ways with a number of Circuit Musicals – it is great worship, they are good fun, and they are a very good way to meet with other people and just share and enjoy each other's company. They also offer something to people who are just curious about Christianity.

There will be an opportunity for singers to practise the songs in the lead up to the day. You do not need to come to these familiarisation sessions and it is ok to just come on the day for the rehearsal and presentation.

Please book the date. There will be more information nearer the time, but if you want to know more, please do contact me

Thank you – David Webb, circuitmusical@bhbcircuit.org.uk ☎: 07848 843360



Caring for the donkeys of Gaza

A charity based in the UK is sending emergency vets to care for donkeys in Gaza.

Safe Haven for Donkeys was set up about 20 years ago to treat working donkeys across Israel and the Palestinian Territories.

But the charity says that its mobile first aid team is even more necessary now, because with fuel scarce and so many vehicles damaged, donkeys have become a main mode of transport in Gaza, carrying water and medicine, and even sick people to hospital.

However, the animals are often suffering. They face starvation, dehydration and open wounds. Since April, the team has treated approximately 800 donkeys and horses. *PP*



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Audio Visual Update – December 2024



Over the course of November, you will have seen some very obvious changes to the main hall. At the time of writing, we have moved the wooden cross and we plan that by the end of November the screen will have been moved. We hope that in December the loud speakers will be taken off their temporary stands and fixed up on the side walls. I want to say thank you to many who have helped in words and actions in all sorts of different ways with this, and thank you to everybody who has put up with change and disruption. Our work is not finished, but we have made progress.

The next phase of the work will involve changing the sound mixer and also trialling some ways to allow those leading worship to see what is on the screen without having to look up at the monitors. We are also investigating how we can provide tablets for people whose eyesight is poor to enable them to see what happens on the screen. We continue to think about other ways to support the life and mission of this place with the technology that we can offer.

You will be aware that we are keen to make use of the screen space when a service is not happening to provide a space that would allow us to share God's love or something about the Christian story for anybody who comes into the hall. This might be through images, craftwork, even sculptures, etc that would be hung on the wall or stood on the ground. We are therefore keen to identify potential designers, artists and artisans who could enable this to happen. If this is you, please do contact me. There are some who have already said that they are interested in helping with this – thank you – and it would be good to have input from others.

I am investigating whether we can identify somebody from outside our community who could help us with this. If you have ideas of somebody with suitable skills, please do mention it to them, or ask me to speak to them. Please do speak with me if you have comments or suggestions about anything here.

Thank you, **David Webb** david@webbfamily.org.uk

Teaching the Lord's Prayer across the North of England

The Archbishop of York Stephen Cottrell plans to teach the Lord's Prayer across the North of England throughout 2025, a priority of his vision for *Faith in the North*. Archbishop Stephen is to visit dioceses in the Northern Province of the C of E where he will be sharing the relevance of the Lord's Prayer to our world today, encouraging people to pray and live by this, as part of their missionary discipleship. Archbishop Stephen is encouraging prayer, storytelling and church planting inspired by the Northern Saints such as Hild, Cuthbert, Bede and Paulinus. The aim is to foster deeper connections with the Christian faith across the north and renew the Church's missionary purpose to share God's love with all.

Archbishop Stephen said "In less than 70 words, Jesus gives us a prayer to learn by heart and a prayer that gets inside our hearts, shaping the way we live. The Lord's Prayer surely is the best place to start. It is said in just about every church service, from the coronation of the King to the christening of a child. It's a challenging prayer and when we say this prayer together, we become part of God's movement of change, of bringing God's heaven to earth. It teaches us how to pray. But it also teaches us how to live". ***Faith in the North*** is a movement of prayer and strategic resourcing which aims to help recapture the missional energy and commitment to prayer of the Anglo Saxon saints leading towards 2027, with the celebration of the 1400th anniversary of the establishment of the Church of Saint Peter in York and baptism of King Edwin by Paulinus in 627. (from PP)

A Candle

Sometimes its flame
Burns bright and tall,
At others
It's small and flickers.

Like this flame
I too am often restless,
Help me find rest in You.
It brings light to the darkness,
Help me bring light to others.
It brings warmth as it burns,
Help me warm someone's day.
This flame can ignite other candles,
Lord give me the courage to share You
With others, so Your name shines brightly.

Written by Jennifer Pitt

(This is the last of Jennifer's prayers)



A DATE:

Hospital Carol Singing –

Christians from across the churches of Basingstoke are welcome to come along and bring Christmas joy to the patients, visitors and staff at Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital.

(Refreshments will be served afterwards).

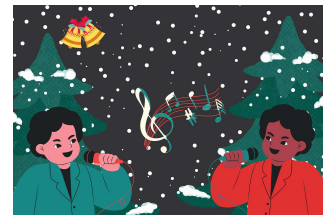
**DATE: Wednesday
18 December,**

6 pm – 8 pm

**meet at the Chapel @
Basingstoke Hospital.**

More info: Christine Dival: christine.divall@hhft.nhs.uk

christine.divall@hhft.nhs.uk



Iconic Bethlehem Carol Sheet celebrates 70 years in Print (PP)

It was back in 1954 when the charity, BibleLands Mission Aid Society, first tentatively decided to print a colourful compilation of popular Christmas carols, alongside images of some of the people BibleLands served. From the start, the scheme was an immense success. The carol sheets were so popular that even that first year, 100,000 copies were insufficient to meet the demand of schools, churches, British army bases at home and abroad and Royal Navy ships across the world. The donations appeal towards the BibleLands projects in the carol sheet also raised hundreds of pounds.

When 500,000 copies were quickly sold in 1955, BibleLands knew it had a winner on its hands. So it was that, in 1956, with 1.5 million carol sheets sales as the target, an accompanying catalogue of Christmas cards and gifts and prayers for God's favour was also launched. The plan was overwhelmingly successful – much needed funds were raised for the work of BibleLands.

Since then, many millions of carol sheets have been sold, until this year the charity, now renamed Embrace the Middle East, has produced a new-look **Edition with 27 popular carols**, including three new additions for this year: *O Holy Night*, *See Him Lying on a Bed of Straw (Calypso Carol)* and *The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came*. For more information or to purchase your copy, visit: <https://shop.embraceme.org/collections/bethlehem-carols>

A Gift from God

The President of Azerbaijan at the recent COP29 Conference on Climate Awareness, stated that oil and gas in his country are a “gift from God”. In the light of the steady advance of global temperature due to the now proven uncontrolled use of fossil fuels this is certainly a controversial statement.

Our Lord blesses us with His gifts individually, in societies, as nations, and as a global community in many ways. We do not deserve them through any work of our own but should receive them as undeserved gifts from God.

However what we then do with our gifts is the challenge that faces all of us. We should receive them all with thanks, and use wisdom and discernment in using them. Many will be answers to our prayers and put to good use as requested.

We should be aware of the Great Commandment “*Love your neighbour as yourself*”, Mark 12:31, and ensure that others around us who are in need are able to share in our good fortune.

In the wider sense both individually and globally we should be very much aware of our responsibilities in this World as given to us by God. This is clearly defined in Genesis 1:26, where God said, “*Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground*”.

Our present situation with global warming and its consequences escalating out of control is one of many examples clearly telling us that we, mankind, from the earliest of times, have not been diligent in ruling our world. We have not been wise in using God's Gifts in “ruling over all the earth” but have exploited them by our personal desires for power, greed and self-gratification. The exploitation of fossil fuels in recent times is clear evidence of this!

The greatest gift that God has given us individually from the beginning of time is “the Gift of Life in this World”.

Each one of us now should actively and urgently take responsibility for managing our World, protecting it from further destruction, and work towards restoring it as was God's Gift of Creation given for us. If we do not achieve this, God's most precious “Gift of Life in this World” will be taken from us!

Martin Frost, November 2024

3rd Basingstoke Boys Brigade

***Boys Brigade – especially
5 – 8 yr-old boys –***

If there are any boys with nothing to do on a Friday night between 6.30pm – 7.45pm, it's £2 per session and boys can come any Friday to see what we do. If they want to join us on a regular basis that would be great. The older Boys meet from 7.45pm until 10pm.

- 20 years ago, on 26 December 2004 the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami (also called Boxing Day Tsunami) took place. A massive undersea earthquake near Sumatra caused a devastating tsunami that swamped coastal areas in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, Thailand and East Africa. It was one of the deadliest natural disasters in recorded history, killing more than 230,000 people in 14 countries.

Oakley Methodist Church



Coffee Mornings on:

**Tuesdays 10 December
and 14 & 28 January**

10.30 am – 12 noon

**£1 for a bottomless
tea or coffee & biscuits**

**Paperbacks available
30p each**

**Proceeds to the Red Cross
this year.**

Oakley Methodist Christmas Fayre

This event was held on Saturday 9 November from 10 am to 12 noon. What a wonderful success it was, thanks to the 3 Charities taking part and to all the people who came to support it. It was especially lovely to see some friends from our circuit.

Thank you to everyone who came, I hope everyone enjoyed it in spite of the crush. (I'm planning a different layout next year if, God willing, we are able to repeat the event).

The three charities represented at the Fayre were all delighted with their results. **Sebastian Action Trust** raised £135.00, **Leukaemia and Myeloma Research** raised £142.00, **St Michael's Hospice** raised £150+ (*transactions made by card, total not yet available.*)

The number of Sweets in the tub was 87, won by a lady called Karen. The number of Santa Hats was 101, won by Dave Nicholson. The weight of the Goodie Bag was 7lb7ozs/ 3.703kg, won by Helen Khan.

And finally, the event raised £400 for church funds. So, once again, thank you to everyone for supporting the event and for your generosity.

Eldwyth Stacey

Oakridge Methodist Church

Vivian Road, Basingstoke, RG21 5QB

'Welcome Hub'

EVERY Wednesday, 10 am – 12 noon

A 'busy group' doing mainly craft activities such as blanket or card making for local charities, but also opportunity to bring along something you are working on.

Refreshments and some craft materials provided. No charge but donations gratefully received.

Coffee & Craft

Why not come and give us a try?

Old Basing Methodist Church

CAMEO Club:

**NO CAMEO in December
but meeting again on
14 January between
11.30 am – 1 pm**



**Light lunch will be served. Please bring
along crafts of your choice. All Welcome.**

On Friday 13 December

**a Joint Cafe Venture –
'Old Basing Methodist Church and
St Mary's Church, Old Basing' called:**

"The Welcome Tea Room"

Opens its doors for the first time. It will be held in the Parish Room at St Mary's between 2 pm – 4.30 pm where delicious homemade cakes and hot drinks will be served. You pay what you can afford but any donations will be gratefully received.

All are welcome.

On Friday 10 January 2025 –

"The Welcome Tea Room"

will be open again at St Mary's.

Timings and other information as above.



PRAYING & LISTENING



Sunday mornings –

Anyone wearing this badge will be available to listen & pray quietly with you at the back of the church after the service.

The Fountain Prayer Group meets in the **Worship Arena or Quiet Room** at St Andrew's Trinity on: **Thursday 12 December and Thursdays 9 & 23 January**



We gather at 2.30 pm and begin at 2.45 pm with a short reflection. The rest of our time together includes a period of silence and some prayerful sharing. We finish the formal part at around 4 pm. Please come even if you cannot attend every meeting.

Angela Webb (angela@webbfamily.org.uk)

The List of - Church Stewards & Congregational Representatives on Church Council can be found on the **Notice Board at the back of the Church, along with a copy of the most Current Church Council Minutes.**

Trinity Circle

Our next **meeting** will be on: **Tuesday 10 December at 7.30 pm at St Andrew's Trinity**

This will be a **'Christmas Evening'** arranged by the Committee.

All are welcome.

We **DO NOT MEET** in **January & February, Sonia**

Northern Housegroup

Our next Housegroup is on: **Tuesday 3 December at 7.30 pm at Sonia's home.**

Our first Housegroup for the New Year will be on **Tuesday 7 January** at the earlier time of **6.30 pm** at **Janet & David's home.**

(JAM) – 'Jesus And Me'

Meets: 2.30 pm – 4.30 pm, usually the 1st Sunday of the month at St Andrew's Trinity Methodist Church



The Next 'JAM' Dates are:

- **Sunday 1 Dec and a**
- **Christingle Service on Tuesday 24 December at 4 pm**



* * * * *

JAM – Children & Families meet at **St Andrew's Trinity, usually the 1st Sunday of the month** to hear stories of **Jesus, Craft, Singing & Tea.**

All very welcome, do come & join us.

South Ham Churches Lunch Club

St Andrews, St Josephs & St Peters run a Lunch Club on the 2nd & 4th Fridays, 12.30 pm, at St Joseph's Church, St Michael's Rd. Open to over 55's, cost £5 per head. More info from **Churches' Co-ordinator, Hannah Lock**. If you would like to help more info from **Bob Lock, Methodist Co-ordinator.**



Litter



We have a gang of litter pickers who clean surrounding areas of the church, in pairs. Usually the rota calls on people once every two months. The church is surrounded on three sides by a public right of way, so you can gather the amount of litter found. The Gang has depleted in numbers so.....***If you can help in any way, please see Bob L, equipment provided, thank you.***

Pixabay

Newsletter: 'Events / Dates / Contributions'



Please send me any: ***Events, 'Dates for Diaries', 'other contributions'*** you would like included or promoted in ***'OUR' Newsletter.*** ***Thank you in advance, Hazel, Ed.*** ***(Items can be: bible passages, prayers, poems, stories, outings, holidays, events or anything else you would like included).***

'TUESDAY COFFEE CLUB'

Come and enjoy a ***'cuppa & chat'***, everyone very welcome. We run alongside the ***Mug & Biscuit*** at the back of the church **10 am to 11.30 am**, finishing in plenty of time to grab lunch in the Mug & Biscuit! We aim to stay open ***all year apart from Christmas,***
Di Spencer



Pixabay

Useful 📞 & Email Contacts:

Our Minister is: Revd Claire Simpson
email: revclaire72@btinternet.com
NOT Contactable in Jan & Feb 2025

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Church Contacts: Joint Senior Stewards:
Diane Bath: 📞 01256 320429 /
email: dianebath51@gmail.com

Linda Hoe: 📞: 01256 417219 /
email: lindahoe@hotmail.co.uk

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St Andrew's Trinity Bookings: Contact: Bob Lock, email: robertlock1@virginmedia.com

* * * * *

St Andrew's Trinity E-News, Editor: Hazel Harris, email: hazel@basingstokecircuit.net
📞 01256-461375, address:
16B Portacre Rise, B/Stoke, RG21 8YQ

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'Singing Group Dates'

The **'Singing Group'** is meeting next on the following **Mondays: 2 & 9 December at 11am.**



We look forward to seeing you, everyone is very welcome, especially a few more men. Do come and join us for an enjoyable 'sing'. If you would like more information, have a word with Peggy.

Peggy and Hazel

Other Useful 📞 & Email Contacts:

Circuit Administrator: Mrs Marion Young, can be contacted: 📞 07503 652961 (working hours only) & email: marion.y@bhbcircuit.org.uk

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Circuit Administrator: Lee Frost, can be contacted: 📞 07586 441328 & by email at: lee.f@bhbcircuit.org.uk

* * * * *

We are now part of the new Berkshire and Hampshire Borders Methodist Circuit, the new website is: www.bhbcircuit.org.uk

Berkshire and Hampshire Borders Methodist Circuit is a Registered Charity, the Charity No is: 1134891

* * * * *

'Crafting Bits' – If anyone wants some Crafting Bits

(we have paints, coloured sand, felt, google eyes, lollipop sticks and much more), please contact: **Yvonne Hunt:** Outreach@BRMC.uk



Pixabay

- The great thing is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving, *Anon*

Around our Circuit / Area - What's on & Where ? ***(taken from circuit notices)***



Berkshire & Hampshire Borders
Methodist Circuit

- **NEW Circuit Website: 'Berkshire & Hampshire Borders Methodist Circuit' at: www.bhbcircuit.org.uk**
- **New Events – "Hot Potatoes" Discussion Group – 2 Dec 2024:** An open discussion group held on Zoom on the first Monday of every month to think about and share ideas on the "Hot Potatoes" that are sometimes considered too hot to handle. Subjects vary each month and all are welcome to suggest topics – we always try to bring a theological slant into the conversation! For further details, please contact Revd Rachel Borgars (rachel.borgars@methodist.org.uk or ☎: 07889 905753). Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84961411119> (Meeting ID: 849 6141 1119) – there will be a waiting room but no password.
- **Silchester Methodist Church are holding a Christmas Coffee Morning on Saturday 7 December, 10 am – 12 noon.** There will be a stall selling a variety of items including Christmas cards, gifts and home produce. Come along for tea / coffee, a mince pie or a slice or two of homemade cake. All proceeds will be donated to 'Action for Children' (registered charity no 1097940/SC038092).
- **Hungerford Memory Worship** – come and join us for a 30-minute informal Church Service. Everyone welcome, especially those living with dementia and their carers. Traditional hymns, a Bible reading, prayer and a Thought-for-the-Day, followed by drinks and biscuits. **2nd Thursday each month (next 12 Dec)**, The Methodist Church, Bridge Street, RG17 0EH at 2.30 pm, led by Revd Andy Fitchet and Karen Frost. Free parking outside the church or in Canal Walk. Step-free access to the church. Accessible toilet. Enquiries to Karen on: ☎07444 851606.
- **Hungerford: Will you be alone on Christmas Day? Would you like to join our Christmas Lunch as a helper or guest?** To register your interest, contact Hilary or email: steward.hungerfordmethodist@gmail.com Please also let us know if you would need transport to be able to attend. **Venue:** Hungerford Methodist Church Hall, Bridge Street RG17 0EH.
- **Advance Notice – Monthly Online Bible Study:** An open Bible study meeting via Zoom will recommence on 22 January 2025 at 7:30 pm and on the fourth Wednesday of the month thereafter. The theme / book has yet to be decided, so if there is something you would like to consider and study together, please let Revd Rachel Borgars know via rachel.borgars@methodist.org.uk or ☎: 07889 905753. This will be the Zoom link and there will be a waiting room, but no password. Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81154471992> (Meeting ID: 811 5447 1992)
- **Petersfield Area Churches Annual Coach Holiday – Tour to Norfolk, Sat 5 July – Sat 12 July 2025, Holiday Inn, Ipswich Road, Norwich.** Located on the outskirts of Norwich, the hotel has 119 well-appointed bedrooms (37 on ground floor) TV, iron & ironing board, tea / coffee making facilities. Bar & restaurant, Health Club with indoor heated pool, gymnasium, sauna, beauty treatments. **Price includes** 7 nights Dinner, Bed & Breakfast and from £329 per room to £799 per person, depending on number of paying passengers, sharing twin / double rooms & single room supplement (23 singles available). Trips every day with 1 free day. **Further info contact: Gordon Churchill email at: gordonachurchill@gmail.com ☎: 01730 260454. To book: – call Angela Holidays ☎: 02380 404536, quote reference MP075.**

Christian Resources still available:



Steve Wood, is continuing to supply Christian Resources to Newbury, Thatcham and the surrounding area via 'Sonrise Christian Resources'.

You can **phone Steve on ☎: 07396 825097** for any advice and to talk through the options available – a bookstall at an upcoming event? Call us or email us – we'd love to talk through your requirements and how we can help.

A whole range of Christmas products, including the ever-popular **Hannah Dunnett calendar**, are available, look at our **website at:**
www.sonrisechristianresources.co.uk

We would love to help you source any item, so whatever you need do contact us – be it **Advent candles, Advent calendars, Christmas cards, 2025 calendars or general Christian books, cards and gifts.**

Our contact details are: email:
stevewood@sonrisechristianresources.co.uk

☎: 07396 825097 or Facebook:
www.facebook.com/sonrisechristianresources

*Be near me, Lord Jesus,
I ask thee to stay
Close by me for ever,
and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children
in thy tender care,
And fit us for Heaven,
to live with thee there*

Anonymous

Verse 3 of 'Away in a Manger'

Published by St Andrew's Trinity Methodist Church



Extraordinary Gifts from a Methodist Charity

Website: <https://www.allwecan.org.uk>



As with many charities, **'Extraordinary Gifts'** can be found on the **'All We Can' website.** **Just a few** of the many gifts can be found here.

Bee-lieve – The Bukedi Beekeepers Association in Uganda work with individuals and community groups to establish beekeeping, promoting environmental conservation and enabling income generation. **£10 could provide** communities with training in beekeeping.

Bookworm – **£30 could enable** young girls in Malawi to return to school to learn the vital skills of reading, writing and arithmetic. Many girls leave school prematurely in Malawi, due to early marriage.

Super Spuds – **£16 could provide** a family in Ethiopia with potato seeds, to ensure healthy harvests and help beat hunger. **All We Can** provides potatoes which adapt to the changing weather better than other crops.

Chirpy Chips – **£15 could provide** 10 chickens each, to 50 women in Ethiopia to kick-start a business and build a sustainable livelihood.

Goat For It – **£28 could provide** a vulnerable family in Zimbabwe with a goat, as well as training in how to rear and care for it, goats not only provide milk, their manure is excellent for compost, increasing the amount of food a family can grow.

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Diary Page, St Andrew's Trinity – CHECK out the Church Noticeboards !

Dates	Timings	EVENTS at St Andrew's Trinity unless advised
Weekly & Monthly Events – T/T (term-time)		
Tue, Wed, Thur <i>weekly T/T only</i>	10am–1.30pm	Mug & Biscuit is Open for drinks, biscuits, cakes, tea-cakes, light lunches, <i>p 21</i>
Tues, <i>weekly</i>	10am–11.30am	Tuesday Coffee Club, <i>p 17</i>
Wed <i>weekly T/T</i>	1pm–3pm	Knit One, Drop One
2 nd /4 th Frid month	12.30pm	S/Ham Churches Lunch Club, <i>St Joseph's Church, p 16</i>
2 nd & 4 th Thurs <i>monthly</i>	2.30pm–4pm	The Fountain Prayer Group twice monthly unless otherwise advised, <i>p 16</i>
4 th Tues evening	6.30pm	Harrow Way Housegroup
Youth Organisations – Weekly, Mostly Term-time – abbreviated to T/T in places		
Mon, <i>weekly, term-time (T/T)</i>	7pm–8.30pm	1 st South Ham Guides, (10–14 yr olds), Leader: Sarah, New Members Sign Up via Girl Guides' website: www.girlguiding.org.uk/joinus
Wed, <i>weekly, T/T</i>	4.30pm–5.45pm	3 rd South Ham Rainbows, (4–7 yr olds), Lena Ponting
Wed, <i>weekly, T/T</i>	6pm–7.30pm	3 rd South Ham Brownies, (7–10 yr olds), Lena Ponting
Thurs <i>weekly, T/T</i>	10am–11am	Playtime U5 Group, Contact: Theresa Strachan
Frid, <i>weekly</i>	6.30pm–10pm	3 rd B/Stoke Boys Brigade, Captain: Theresa Strachan, <i>p14</i>
Other Events (including events that are once a month)		
DEC / JAN		
Sund 1 Dec	2.30pm	JAM, <i>p 16</i>
Mond 2 & 9 Dec	11.00am	Singing Group meet, <i>p 17</i>
Tues 3 Dec	7.30pm	Northern Housegroup meet at Sonia's, <i>p 16</i>
Sund 8 Dec	After church	Christian Bookstall, <i>p 8</i>
Tues 10 Dec	7.30pm	Trinity Circle meet, <i>p 16</i>
Thur 12 Dec	2.30pm	The Fountain Prayer Group meets, <i>p 16</i>
Sat 14 Dec	1.00pm	Christmas Lunch, Ticket Deadline 8 December, <i>p 5</i>
Thurs 19 Dec	2.00pm	Christmas Medley, <i>p 8</i>
Tues 24 Dec	4pm	Christingle Service, Christmas Eve, led by JAM, <i>p 16</i>
Tues 24 Dec	5.30pm	Communion Service Christmas Eve
Wed 25 Dec	10.00am	Christmas Morning Worship
Tues 7 Jan	6.30pm	Northern Housegroup meet at Janet & David's home
Thurs 9 & 23 Jan	2.30pm	Fountain Prayer Group
Fri 17 Jan	DEADLINE	For NEXT St Andrew's Trinity E-News
SOME DATES for our other Basingstoke Churches for DEC / JAN & our wider circuit		
Every Wed	10am – 12pm	Welcome Hub at Oakridge MC, Every Wednesday, <i>p15</i>
Tues 10 Dec & 14 & 28 Jan	10.30am – 12	Coffee Mornings at Oakley MC, <i>p 15</i>
Fri 13 Dec/10 Jan	2pm-4.30pm	NEW Venture – Welcome Tea Room at St Mary's, <i>p 15</i>
Tues 14 Jan	11.30–1pm	Cameo Club meets next at Old Basing MC, <i>p 15</i>
5/19 & 20 Dec	Various times	Care Home Ministry Events run by Oakridge MC, <i>p 9</i>
Dec & Jan Dates	Various	What's on in our Wider Circuit, <i>p 18</i>

The Mug & Biscuit, St Andrew's Trinity Methodist Church is Open on:



Tuesdays: 10 am to 1.30 pm (term-time)
Wednesdays: 10 am to 1.30 pm (term-time)
Thursdays: 10 am to 1.30 pm (term-time)



- We serve: **home-made cakes, jacket potatoes, toasted sandwiches & tea cakes.**
- Menu is subject to change. **Last Orders for hot food 1 pm.**
- Takeaway Available. Credit Cards Accepted.



• **The Mug & Biscuit is NOT OPEN During School Holidays**

The Mug & Biscuit is registered as a 'Warm Hub Opening' during 'Mug & Biscuit' Hours



We look forward to welcoming old & new friends.



The Mug & Biscuit Team



Any queries, **Offers of Help** – contact: **Linda Hoe** ☎: 07963 583506

RECYCLE Used Postage Stamps via the box in the Mug & Biscuit for **'St Michael's Hospice'**.



THANKS, **Bob**

Image, Pete's photo

RECYCLE Bottle Tops – In the Brown Box on the right at the back of the church.

Proceeds to the Hospice. Please leave tops in the bag you bring them in if you can. **I also recycle 'Milkman' foil milk bottle tops too.**



Thank you, Helen



'RECYCLE plastic milk bottle tops' (only 'milk' ones), by giving them to Pamela who has a contact with the Hants & Isle of Wight Air Ambulance, or ☎: 012546 467702



At 28.11.24 Foodbank – Most Needed: Loo Roll

- UHT Fruit Juice
- Powdered Milk
- Shampoo
- Instant Coffee
- Cooking Sauces
- Tinned Fruit
- Savoury Snacks / Crisps

At 28.11.24 the Foodbank – Running Low:

- Tinned Veg
- Hot & Cold desserts
- UHT Milk
- Nappies size 6 & above
- Small Packs of tea
- Tinned Meat
- Custard
- Savoury Spreads

At 28.11.24 the Foodbank – Running Low (cont'd):

- Rice Pudding
- Tinned Spaghetti / Ravioli
- Sweet Spreads
- Tinned Tomatoes

At 28.11.24 the Foodbank – We have Plenty:

- Pasta & Rice
- Baked beans
- Pulses
- Hot & Cold Cereal
- Non-Dairy Milk
- Sanitary pads
- Baby Food, Formula & Nappies size 5 & below
- Hand soap



More info on web: www.https://basingstoke.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/



Berkshire & Hampshire Borders Methodist Circuit

December 2024 to February 2025

Living Together in Unity

Advent invitation



The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. John 1:5 (NIV)

Let's be still.....
Hush the noise,
Listen for God's song,
God's song of Love,
God's promise of peace on earth.
Let's look forward to
A new heaven and a new earth,
The reign of the Prince of Peace.
Let's ask to be filled with hope, love, peace, and joy.
Let's pray

You might like to read the carol
It came upon a Midnight Clear StF 205 (H&P 108)

Everyday Christmas (Mal 4:2, Mt 1:23)

Light a candle,
Look into the light, Pray.

*Light and life to all He brings,
Risen with healing in His wings*

As the flame rises, Smooth, bright,
Know the comfort of Christ
In the carol speaking Afresh.
Bringing Jesus Into heart and prayer.

Emmanuel, God with us.
Light of the world,
Out of the stable
Into our situations.

Because of Jesus
Christmas is everyday.

The Lord is here.
Hallelujah.

by Daphne Kitching, PP

Prayer for December 2024

Father, the days are short; darkness deepens in December and this year it seems to reflect the darkness in so many parts of the world. We think especially of the land You came to, all those years ago, and other nearby lands where so many are suffering.

Father, thank you that Jesus came into the world as Your Light; that He shines today as brightly and powerfully as He did then, and will do forever.

Help us to open our hearts and minds to allow His light to fill us with the assurance that, no matter what is going on, we are safe in Him.

Thank you that, in Jesus, You have conquered death and darkness; that one day, everyone will bow before Jesus as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, whose Kingdom shall never end.

Help us, in thankfulness and love, to share Your Christmas Light and Hope and Joy.
Hallelujah! In Jesus' name,
Amen

**by Daphne Kitching
PP**

* * * * *

Praying in Advent

All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son and they shall name him Emmanuel", which means, "God is with us."

Matthew 1:22-23 (NRSVA)

Incarnate Jesus come,
Born among us the ordinary and everyday people,
Help us share your hope with the rejected and the suffering,
Come live in our lives.

Wonder-filled Jesus come,
Surprising us amid the gifts and the celebrations,
Help us share your peace with the war-weary and the oppressed,
Come live in our lives.

Looked-for Jesus come,
Changing our future through your vision and promise,
Help us share your joy with the exhausted and the stressed,
Come live in our lives.

Living Jesus,
Present everywhere for all,
Draw us together in your infinite love,
Come Emmanuel.

Almighty God,
You come and meet us,
United in your family through Jesus,
Strengthened by the presence of your Spirit,
One fellowship together because you first loved us.

Christmas Trees

Norway sent a Christmas tree
It marks the Saviour's birth,

The incarnation manifest
as God came down to earth
A babe born to a virgin
would grow up as a man,
Yet still divine, such mystery,
to implement God's plan.

Another tree was put in place
A sacrifice was made,
as on that cross He gave
His life that all men could be saved.

So celebrate that wondrous day
when Jesus left His home,
to bring salvation down to man,
and claim us as His own.

by Megan Carter, PP

* * * *



Wow! Christmas – Creatively Explore Stories in the Bible by Martha Shrimpton. SPCK 10.99

Here is a well-designed and colourful Christmas activity book for children.

The stories cover the birth of Jesus, the shepherds, the journey of the Wise Men, and the giving of gifts. With each story there is a prayer, a craft, and a chance to act out the story, followed by a time for reflection, discussion, and creative praise.

Praying for Christian Unity

You may want to think of the churches in your area, or go for a walk and stop by one as you pray these prayers.

How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!

Psalm 133:1 (NIV)

Prayer:

Loving God, we thank You for the gift of unity, for the joy of shared fellowship and the strength found in our togetherness. In a world marked by division, may we be a witness to Your inclusive love. Help us to seek understanding and reconciliation in our relationships, embracing the beauty of our differences. May Your Spirit guide us in building bridges of peace and love, reflecting the unity we find in You.

It is like precious oil on poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down on the collar of his robe.

Psalm 133:2 (NIV)

Prayer:

Generous God, You anoint us with the oil of Your Spirit, pouring out blessing and grace upon Your people. May Your Spirit flow freely among us, healing our wounds, softening our hearts, and drawing us closer to one another. Let us be vessels of Your love, carrying Your anointing into a world in need of healing. Unite us in Your purpose, so that together we may bear witness to Your boundless mercy.

"It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the Lord bestows his blessing, even life for evermore."

Psalm 133:3 (NIV)

Prayer:

Creator God, like the dew that refreshes the earth, Your blessing renews our hearts. We give thanks for the life You breathe into us, and for the eternal promise of unity with You and with each other. May we strive for unity that reflects Your divine love, celebrating the richness of our diverse expressions of faith. Guide us to live as one body, sharing in Your blessing and working together for the flourishing of all creation.

Church Rules

Six year-old Angie and her four-year-old brother Joel sat together for the Christmas concert in church.

Joel kept giggling and whispering until his big sister had had enough.

"Be quiet in church!"

"Why?" Joel demanded. "Who is going to make me?"

Angie pointed to the back of the church and said: "See those two big men standing at the door? They're hushers."

The Christmas Kitchen

The kitchen is,
at Christmas

A very busy
room!

Lots of work in
such a rush

Or Christmas
Day will loom.

First there is the
cake to bake

and many
pastries too,

Mince pies and
biscuits,

festive fare
there is so

much to do!

Then comes
the day, the

kitchen fills
with wondrous

cooking smells,
as turkey roasts

and parsnip
toasts

the cooks must
work their

spells.

The dinner's on
the table

we gather round
and eat,

but someone
has to wash the

pots

and make the
kitchen neat.

So have a happy
Christmas,

enjoy the festive
fare,

but grab a towel
and help the

cook,

and show them
that you care!

***by Nigel
Beeton, PP***

Praying for the Circuit

So the churches were strengthened in the faith and increased in numbers daily.

During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, 'Come over to Macedonia and help us.' When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.

Acts 16: 5; 9-10 (NRSVA)

A prayer

God of unity and love, we thank you that from the beginning, your Spirit has encouraged churches to recognise our connection to one another, and to offer help and encouragement.

We thank you for our new circuit, for the new opportunities opening up as we share gifts, resources and ministries. Make us gracious and open as we get to know one another and forge new relationships in Jesus. Guide us by your Spirit to recognise your kingdom priorities. Help us to let go of those aspects of our life together which have served their purpose. Give us the courage and confidence to step out in faith in new ventures for the sake of your kingdom.

Pray for

the circuit ministerial staff;

lay staff and circuit stewards;

the work of the mission groups:

HR (contact Rachel Borgars)

Worship (contact Claire Simpson)

Nurturing Faith (contacts Andy Fitchet and Jeongsook Kim)

Children and Young People (contacts Helen Watson and Yvonne Hunt)

Later Years and Care Homes (contact Karen Frost)

Eco-Church (contact John Banks)

Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice!

Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace.

And the God of love and peace will be with you.

2 Corinthians 13: 11 (NIV)

Christmas gifts – Grandfather was talking to his grand-daughter, “When I was a child all we got for Christmas was an apple and an orange.” The little girl clapped her hands in joy. “Brilliant! I’d love a new computer and a mobile!”

Thoughts on the Incarnation – The Son came out from the Father to help us to come out from the world; He descended to us to enable us to ascend to Him – *Anthony of Padua*

The real art of conversation is not only to say the right thing at the right time, but also to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment – *Anon*

**Nolite
Timere
(Do not be
afraid)**

Do not be
afraid
Of angels in
the sky
Nor of the
Babe in
manger laid
Or of the
death He'd
die.

Do not be
afraid
Of magi
bearing gold
their clothes
of velvet and
rich braid
as mysteries
unfold.

Do not be
afraid
Of Herod's
fatal rage
or soldiers on
a killing raid
on those of
tender age.

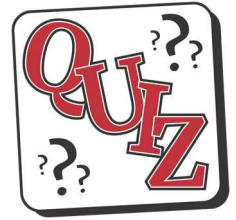
Fear not,
instead
rejoice!
For joy the
angels bring!
Good news is
in the angel's
voice
Of Christ, our
Saviour King!

**by Nigel
Beeton, PP**

* * * *

David Pickup (PP) offers a Quiz based on Events in 2024...

Christmas Quiz 2024



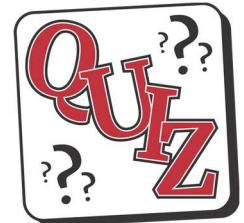
1. This year was a Leap Year. Were 1900 and 2000 Leap Years?
2. What is Whamaggedon?
3. Alan Bates hit the headlines in January. He shares his name with a famous actor, but why is he well known?
4. HRH Duke of Edinburgh met a special resident at St Helena in January who had also met his grandparents. Who is he?
5. A young actor, fresh out of drama school, was told by Arthur Lowe, "don't worry if there's not a lot of lines. They'll come. In the meantime get yourself a funny costume and stand near me". Who was the actor who passed away this year and starred in this classic sitcom?
6. Why did a family photo taken for Mothering Sunday lead to a lot of media speculation?
7. Why did North Korean television object to Alan Titchmarsh and his trousers?
8. How did a black cat called Matins get into trouble on 2nd June 1953 at Westminster Abbey?
9. Where was the Carnation Revolution fifty years ago?
10. What product manufacturer (a byword in usefulness) announced in 2024 they would introduce the first bladeless version?
11. Which Oxford Don applied unsuccessfully to be a code breaker in the 1940s? There was a note by his name "keen."
12. Where is the Elephant and Bear Line?
13. What is Election purdah?
14. What was Gamblegate?
15. 17th July was National Emoji Day. One of the most popular is known as ROTFL. What does that mean?
16. In this year's Olympics the Philippines gold medallist Carlos Yulo got an unusual reward as well as the medal. What was it?
17. In August a north Italian city advertised for people to learn an ancient skill. The job requirements include being 18 or over, having a high school-level education, knowing how to swim, and possessing a medical certificate that proves "a healthy and robust constitution". What job was this for?
18. What music celebrated its 200th anniversary? Liked by many, and Karl Marx thought it "a solemn mass of earthly joy"?
19. Why might you be looking forward to not looking back in anger?
20. What types of special judges were cancelled after 147 years' service and replaced electronically?

Answers on Next Page, 27

- 125 years ago, on 5 December 1899 Henry Tate, British sugar merchant and philanthropist, died. He established the Tate Gallery in London.

Quiz solutions (from page 26)

1. *The year 2000 was a leap year. But 1900 was not. Every 4 years is a leap year.*
2. *Whamageddon is a game played during the 24 days before Christmas in which players try to go from 1 December to the end of Christmas Eve (24 December) without hearing "Last Christmas" by Wham!.*
3. *Sir Alan Bates has been very active in trying to address the Post Office scandal.*
4. *A giant tortoise.*
5. *Ian Lavender, who played Pike.*
6. *The photo taken by HRH Princess of Wales had been not very successfully altered.*
7. *He was wearing American style jeans.*
8. *The cat fell asleep on the Coronation throne.*
9. *Portugal.*
10. *Swiss Army knife.*
11. *JRR Tolkein. The word "keen" may have been a misspelling of his surname.*
12. *Near Coventry from Nuneaton down to Royal Leamington Spa.*
13. *The rule that civil servants and others will normally observe discretion about making new announcements or decisions that could influence voters.*
14. *The allegations that some politicians took bets on when the general election would be when they had insider information.*
15. *Roll on the floor laughing.*
16. *A lifetime of free colonoscopies.*
17. *Gondolier.*
18. *Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.*
19. *The news that the group Oasis are performing again.*
20. *Line judges at Wimbledon.*



The Everlasting Turkey

- On** the first day of Christmas my true love said to me
I've bought a big fresh turkey and a proper Christmas tree.
- On** the second day of Christmas much laughter could be heard
As we tucked into our turkey - a most delicious bird.
- On** the third day of Christmas people came from just next door,
The turkey tasted just as good as it had done before.
- On** the fourth day of Christmas came relations young and old
We finished up the Christmas pud and had the turkey cold.
- On** the fifth day of Christmas, outside the snowflakes scurried,
But we were nice and warm inside, and had the turkey curried.
- On** the sixth day of Christmas, the Christmas spirit died.
The children fought and bickered - we had the turkey rissoles fried.
- On** the seventh day of Christmas my true love he did wince
When he sat down at table - and was offered turkey mince.
- On** the eighth day of Christmas, the dog had run for shelter,
For he'd seen our turkey pancakes and the glass of alka-seltzer.
- On** the ninth day of Christmas, by lunchtime dad was blotto,
He knew that bird was back again, this time as a risotto.
- On** the tenth day of Christmas we were drinking home-made brew

Anything to help us
face that steaming
turkey stew.

On the eleventh day of
Christmas our lovely
tree was moulting,
And with chilli, soy
and oyster sauce,
the turkey was
revolting.

On the twelfth day of
Christmas we had
smiles back on our lips,
The guests had gone,
the turkey too – WE
DINED ON FISH &
CHIPS,

(PP)



Basingstoke Town Chaplaincy

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Basingstoke, RG21 7LJ

☎: 01256 842232

basingstoketownchaplaincy.org.uk
admin@basingstoketownchaplaincy.org.uk

Basingstoke Town Chaplaincy Prayer Letter, November 2024

We hide from death with the increasingly grotesque displays at Hallowe'en and then Remembrance reminds us of the deadly horrors of war. These events give us opportunities to speak about death, sacrifice and grief more openly. Recently we have wept with those who are weeping, mourned the loss of a loved one, worried with someone with a grim diagnosis. People try not to show their hurts but a listening ear is of value and comfort. But Chaplains need to be genuine and meaningful in their response. We share the love of God who can meet an immediate need and give the opportunity of salvation. Shop staff have particularly challenging roles these days as companies cut costs by reducing numbers. Some have been known to Chaplains for years but we struggle to see people regularly due to their busyness and our shortage of Chaplains.

In the Law Courts the opportunities are different as people face issues of offending, being offended against or witnessing unpleasantness and we can talk about circumstances and the power of forgiveness. Conversations with court staff and Probation Officers have also been valuable, especially with the pressures on the Courts and the early release scheme which results in a number of prisoners all being released on the same day. Some ex-prisoners will become homeless and churches are working together to provide a Night Light Winter Shelter.

Recently we hosted an engaging interfaith discussion about the town and our community cohesion. There are many opportunities to engage and work together as churches and as different faiths for the benefit of the community. There is a strong tradition of parades in the Hindu community and we will join several churches holding open events for Christmas. These send out our message of good news and bring the community together.

John Hayward, Chair of Trustees

Please thank God for:

- the positive relations that are built up as we meet people in their workplaces or in town
- people of different faiths who engage with each other
- the general safety and communal spirit in the town and more widely in the area
- answers to prayer for individuals facing difficulties or stress.

Please pray for:

- the well-being of people working in the town
- those keeping us safe – security staff and the Police (with a new local commander)
- those providing services – shop assistants, bus drivers, street cleaners and others
- Chaplains to stay well and be able to visit, and to be guided in what they say
- more Chaplains – 2 more for the Law Courts, and others to provide a wider service.
- other Christian activities in service of the community and help for people
- our plans for the Christmas season to make Jesus known.

Thank you for your prayer support. It means so much to us knowing that we are prayed for to the God who answers prayer. May the Lord also bless you!

* * * * *

Church of England & Methodist Church recommit as Covenant Turns 21

Anglicans and Methodists in England have underlined their commitment to forging closer ties as together they recently marked the 21st anniversary of an historic covenant between the two churches. The Anglican-Methodist Covenant was signed by leaders of the Church of England and the Methodist Church in Great Britain in front of Queen Elizabeth II on 1 November 2003, with services of celebration at both Methodist Central Hall and its immediate neighbour Westminster Abbey. The Covenant recognises how much the two churches – which separated in the 1790s, after the death of John Wesley – have in common and commits them to removing further obstacles towards unity.

It has opened the way to new partnerships on the ground between local Church of England and Methodist congregations, ranging from joint worship and sharing church buildings to shared community projects and staff such as youth and family workers. The Archbishops of Canterbury and York, Justin Welby and Stephen Cottrell, said: "The Covenant was both a reflection of the great degree of friendship and agreement in faith and life which the Church of England and the Methodist Church of Great Britain share, and a commitment that we should work ever more closely together in the years to come." The Revd Helen Cameron, President of the Methodist Conference, and Carolyn Godfrey, Vice-President, said: "It is good to reaffirm the covenant that was signed 21 years ago, and to celebrate the work and worship that happens between the Church of England and the Methodist Church locally and nationally. We look forward in hope to journeying together in the future." *(taken from Parish Pump)*

Canon Paul Hardingham gives thanks to the God who comes among us (PP)...

Christmas Geese

The story is told of a farmer who didn't believe in Jesus. One snowy Christmas Eve, his wife was taking their children to a service at their local church. He refused to come saying: *'Why would God lower Himself to come to Earth as a man? That's ridiculous!'* So, they left him at home. During the evening the winds grew stronger, and the snow turned to a blizzard. He heard a series of loud thumps on the window. In the field near his house he saw a flock of wild geese. They had been migrating south when they got caught in the snowstorm. They were lost and stranded on his farm, with no food or shelter. The man wanted to help the geese and so he opened the doors of the barn, hoping they would go inside for shelter. But the geese didn't do anything, despite the man's efforts to move them. He made a breadcrumb trail leading to the barn and tried to shoo them toward the barn, but they only got more scared and scattered. Nothing he did could get them to go into the barn: *'Why don't they follow me?!'* Then he realised: *'If only I were a goose and become one of them, then I could save them.'* Finally, he understood the heart of the Christmas message. God has become one of us in Jesus. The eternal creator God has entered time and space as a baby, to show us who God is and how we can know Him. This Christmas, let's celebrate again this amazing truth that we have a God who knows and can meet our needs in Jesus. *'The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call Him Immanuel, which means 'God with us'.* Matthew 1:23. *(from PP)*

Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal <https://www.dec.org.uk>

This DEC appeal has raised over £438 million and helped an estimated 8.2 million people affected by the conflict. ***This appeal will close for donations at the end of 2024***, but donations will continue to be spent next year. From delivering essential supplies and services to communities in Ukraine, to helping refugees settle into a new country, your donations have made a huge difference to millions of people affected by the conflict in Ukraine. The DEC humanitarian response work will continue in 2025, thanks to the incredible amount raised.

For the Young & Young at heart

PUZZLES

Crossword

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Luke chapter 2 verses 1-7

The Roman Empire charged the countries it had invaded taxes, based on the number of people and what they earned.

Emperor Augustus gave orders that all people in the Empire were to be registered so they could be taxed.



This census was before Quirinius became Governor of Syria* (*whose own census started riots - Acts 5:37)



When the order came, Mary and Joseph were living in Nazareth.

But Joseph was descended from King David, who had been born in Bethlehem...



so Joseph took Mary to Bethlehem to stay with his family.

Come and meet everyone!



A normal home in Bethlehem.



Stable with mangers

Animals were kept inside at night

Everyone lived and slept in the living room.

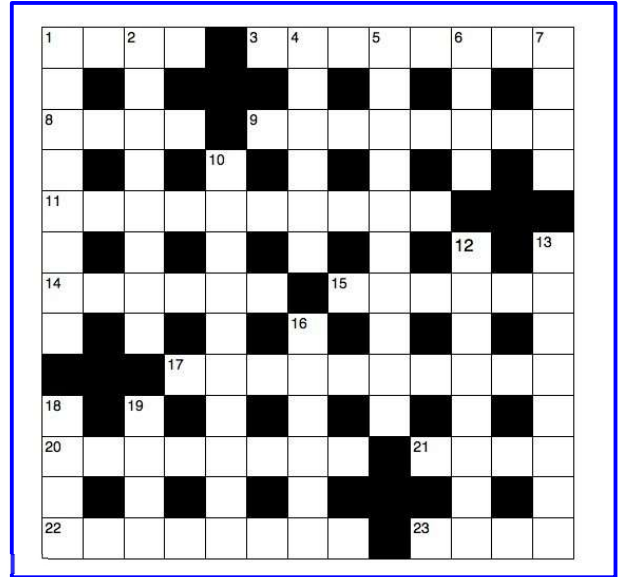
Room added for guests and visitors

While they were staying there, Mary's baby was born.

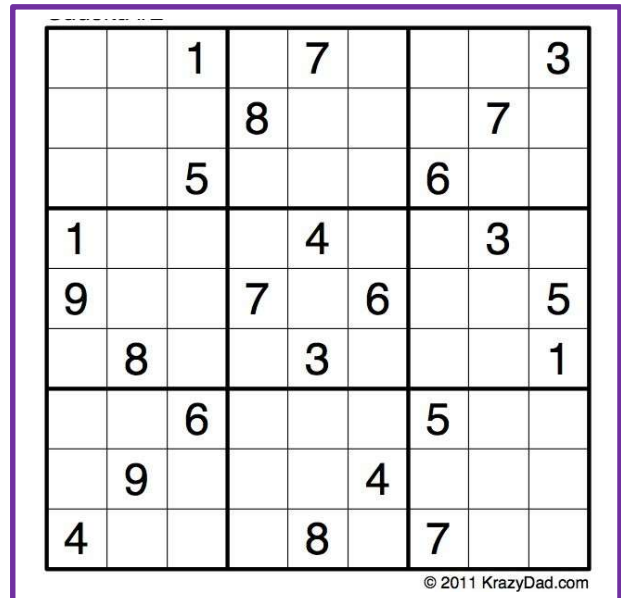


There was no space in the guest room to put a new baby!

So they made a snug bed for Jesus in one of the mangers.



Sudoku

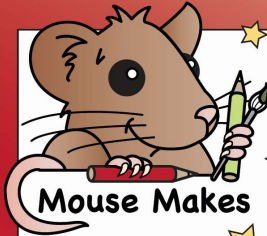


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U G S D C M F A M I L Y
 K M G Y H T L A E W I M
 P C N N R O R E P M E E
 O F I O I S T M D L H G
 O N K S S R E H T A F R
 R T C I T E E N R T K E
 A U O R M T G F E E M E
 I O T P A H R A F E E K
 G V S T S G E R L U D C
 C E N T R U R Y M L S Y
 O D G D S A L O H C I N
 T T H I R D B O R N T V

Father Christmas is based on St Nicholas, born in the 3rd century in a Greek village. One story of his generosity explains why we hang Christmas stockings over our mantelpieces today. A poor family with three daughters needed dowries if they were to marry & not be sold into slavery. Nicholas heard of their plight & tossed three bags of gold into their home through an open window – saving the girls from a life of misery. The bags of gold landed in stockings or shoes left before the fire to dry.

- | | | | |
|------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------|
| Father Christmas | Century Greek | Needy Family | Poor Sick |
| Nicholas | Village | Suffering | Three |
| Stockings | Money | Daughters | Born |
| Devout | Prison | Emperor | Third |
| Wealthy | | | |



Mouse Makes

"The child to be born will be called H _____, the _____ of _____"
 Luke 1:35

"She will bear a son, and shall call his name _____"
 Matthew 1:21

"For unto you is born this day a S _____ who is _____ the _____ R _____"
 Luke 2:11

"Jesus said, I am the _____ Y _____ and the _____ U _____ and the _____ I _____"
 John 14:6

"Jesus said, I am the _____ and the life."
 John 11:25

THE GREATEST GIFT

JESUS THE GREATEST GIFT OF ALL!

BLIGHT LORAY WOJJRE EMMANUEL ABYJESOUR DSAVIOUR SAVRJSD OHOLYORC RTU SONOFMANHART NLSHEPHERDU OYAEPERGIFTG RESURRECTION

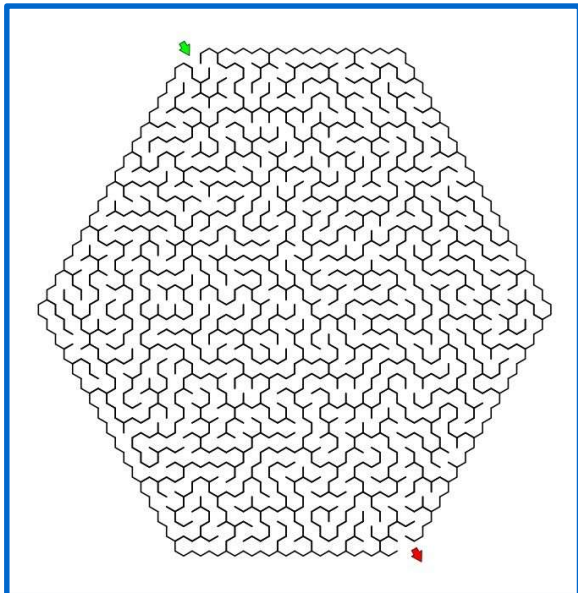
PROPHETI REDEEMER IEMILIG EMESSIAH SRMEGFT TEACHER EVERLASTING KINGOFKINGS INKIGWFDOU SEASONOFGODD SEWOCOUWORD COUNSELLORU

EMMANUEL • MESSIAH REDEEMER • KING OF KINGS • WORD SON OF MAN • EVERLASTING • SHEPHERD • PRIEST • PROPHET • TEACHER LIGHT • BREAD • VINE • DOOR • COUNSELLOR • CHRISTMAS • GIFT

Find the words from the Bible verses too! Dec24 © deborah noble @ parishpump.co.uk

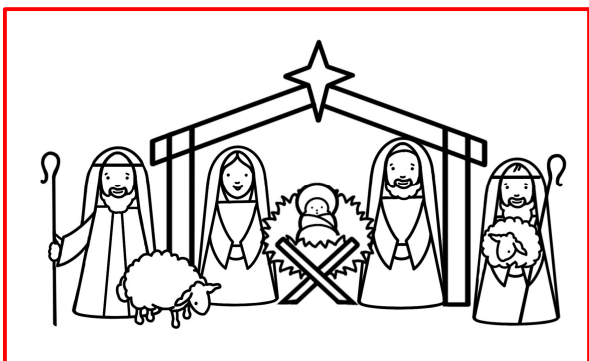
Crossword Clues, Down:

- 'Flee for your lives! Don't — — , and don't stop anywhere in the plain!' (Genesis 19:17) (4,4)
- Principal thoroughfare (Numbers 20:19) (4,4)
- 'The tax collector... beat his — and said, "God have mercy on me, a sinner"' (Luke 18:13) (6)
- 'The zeal of the Lord Almighty will — this' (2 Kings 19:31) (10)
- 'The day of the Lord is — for all nations' (Obadiah 15) (4)
- Specified day (Acts 21:26) (4)
- Deadly epidemic (Deuteronomy 32:24) (10)
- Roman Catholic church which has special ceremonial rights (8)
- Tied up (2 Kings 7:10) (8)
- In his speech to the Sanhedrin, Stephen described Moses as 'powerful in speech and — ' (Acts 7:22) (6)
- 'Although he did not remove the high places, — heart was fully committed to the Lord all his life' (1 Kings 15:14) (4)
- Tribe (Deuteronomy 29:18) (4)



Crossword Clues, Across:

- 'The blind receive sight, the — walk' (Luke 7:22) (4)
- Got (Philippians 3:12) (8)
- Leave out (Jeremiah 26:2) (4)
- Castigated for using dishonest scales (Hosea 12:7) (8)
- Weighty (1 John 5:3) (10)
- 'Now the serpent was more — than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made' (Genesis 3:1) (6)
- 'Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot — God' (Romans 8:8) (6)
- Because Israel lacked one of these, tools had to be sharpened by the Philistines (1 Samuel 13:19) (10)
- In his vision of the two eagles and the vine, this is how Ezekiel described the latter (Ezekiel 17:8) (8)
- Rite (anag.) (4)
- Nine gigs (anag.) (8)
- 'The eye cannot say to the — , "I don't need you"' (1 Corinthians 12:21) (4)



What would you like for Christmas? A little girl visited Father Christmas in the local garden centre grotto. He welcomed her with a smile and asked what she would like for Christmas. She gasped and stared at him in horror. "Didn't you get my email?!"

Puzzle Pages Solutions

Across: 1, Lame. 3, Obtained. 8, Omit. 9, Merchant. 11, Burdensome. 14, Crafty. 15, Please. 17, Blacksmith. 20, Splendid. 21, Tier. 22, Singeing. 23, Hand.

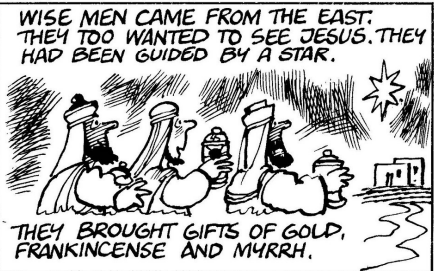
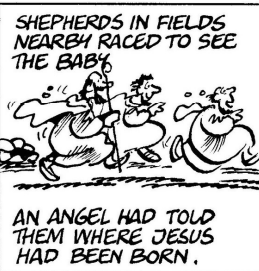
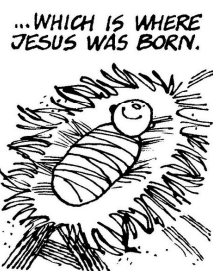
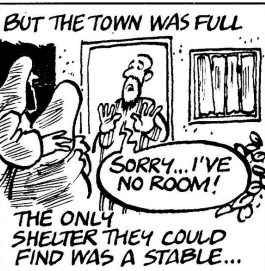
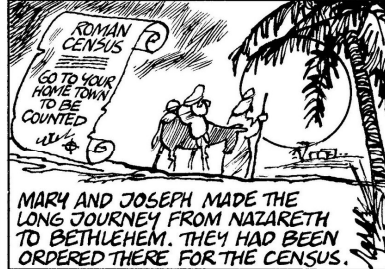
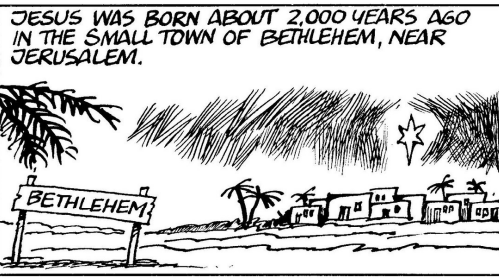
Down: 1, Look back. 2, Main road. 4, Breast. 5, Accomplish. 6, Near. 7, Date. 10, Pestilence. 12, Basilica. 13, Tethered. 16, Action. 18, Asa's. 19, Clan.

Sudoku Solution

6	2	1	4	7	9	8	5	3
3	4	9	8	6	5	1	7	2
8	7	5	1	2	3	6	9	4
1	6	2	5	4	8	9	3	7
9	3	4	7	1	6	2	8	5
5	8	7	9	3	2	4	6	1
2	1	6	3	9	7	5	4	8
7	9	8	2	5	4	3	1	6
4	5	3	6	8	1	7	2	9



A Very Special Baby



h	k	n	h	t	h	f	a	m	i	l	y
s	t	a	b	l	e	n	e	b	d	h	m
g	p	z	u	c	j	h	g	s	a	n	a
e	m	a	n	g	e	r	u	y	v	b	r
y	v	r	c	l	u	i	e	r	i	r	y
w	o	e	h	e	n	s	s	i	d	o	v
b	j	t	r	i	r	t	t	a	j	o	p
v	e	h	r	y	p	b	a	u	o	m	b
b	s	i	u	h	o	m	e	x	s	s	e
f	u	l	i	v	i	n	g	d	e	q	a
q	s	e	m	p	i	r	e	w	p	s	n
v	i	s	i	t	o	r	s	s	h	n	u

- | | | | | | |
|----------|----------|--------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| Baby | Everyone | Born | Living | Home | Bethlehem |
| Nazareth | Visitors | Rom | Quirinius | Augustus | Jesus |
| Family | Space | Manger | Bed | Joseph | Syria |
| Mary | Empire | Taxes | David | Guest | Stable |