

Rejoice!

December 2013



**The Magazine of the
West Norfolk Methodist Circuit**

Autumn is a busy time in the life of the church with celebrations of Harvest, Church Councils, Craft Fairs, Remembrance services, Christmas Bazaars and the inevitable countdown to Christmas. The Chamber of Commerce says the Christmas rush begins early. But in fact the Christmas rush began over 2000 years. It says in the Gospel, "*the shepherds came with haste*". The original Christmas began with people dashing all over the place. Judeans, including Mary and Joseph, trying to get back for a Census; King Herod's police searching for a subversive baby; wise men on the move, shepherds dashing off to find out what was happening in Bethlehem.

What's the modern Christmas rush all about? Lots of people packing into stores after a bargain. And a bargain is where you get, very cheaply, something that's worth a lot more.

That's what the shepherds were after, a bargain. They had heard that the baby in the manger was called Jesus, because he would save his people from their sins. If we had to pay full whack for our own misdeeds, according to the scales of divine justice, it would cost, as they say, an arm and a leg. Jesus came to save us. Christmas is about much more than a rush to the shops but there's nothing wrong with being excited at Christmas time. We should be excited. As Christians we are celebrating the birth of our Saviour.

I think the Grinch said it well:

**And the Grinch, with his grinch-feet ice-cold in the snow,
Stood puzzling and puzzling: "How could it be so?"**

"It came without ribbons! It came without tags!"

"It came without packages, boxes or bags!"

And he puzzled three hours, till his puzzler was sore.

Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before!

"Maybe Christmas", he thought, " doesn't come from a store".

"Maybe Christmas.....perhaps.....means a little bit more!"

I hope you're able to take some time out of the hustle and bustle to reflect on what this season is really all about and to thank God for his gift to us.

I do wish you all a very Happy Christmas and peace in the New Year!

Every Blessing

Rev. Marie Whitcombe

Praying together in the Circuit

Galatians 4:4-7

But when the right time finally came, God sent His own Son. He came as the son of a human mother and lived under the Jewish Law, to redeem those who were under the Law, so that we might become God's children. To show that you are His children, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, the Spirit who cries out, "Father, my Father." So then, you are no longer a slave but a child. And since you are His child, God will give you all that He has for His children.

God loved us and gave His Son.

Jesus entered time and history to redeem us.

God sent the Holy Spirit into our hearts.

The Holy Spirit is the mark of His ownership upon us.

You have been redeemed. You have been purchased,
not with corruptible things like silver and gold,
but with the precious blood of Jesus.

God sent His Son, The Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit

The Father, Son and Holy Spirit sent the Church
into all the world.

"How wonderful is the coming of messengers who bring good news!"

Prayers have been requested for:-

Derek + Viv, Stephanie, Janice, Marie + children. Anne, Amy, Trisha, Linda, Ruth Harbach, Andrew, Mavis, Julia, Rachel, Judy, Ruth, Dulcie + Neill. Kelly, Kath, Stephen + Victoria, William, Tom has made significant progress recovering from injuries received in a road traffic accident. Ken recently diagnosed with a terminal illness, and for his wife Norma. Bob Cross poorly at home; Mary Fisher

Praying for the Circuit Mondays 9.30 am at London Road.
Thursdays 11.00am at Downham Market

Day for Pastoral Carers

The recent day for Pastoral Carers in the West Norfolk Circuit was held at Hunstanton church on Saturday 19th October. There were 34 people attending representing 15 churches.

Our theme was “Loneliness”, which can affect any one of us at any time. In our first morning session the Rev. Kim Nally and Pearl Plaice shared with us their personal experiences of loneliness and how it affected them. Even during the difficult times they knew that God’s hand was upon them and the support of others was crucial.

In our second session the Rev. Marie Whitcombe shared with us how she had been privileged, as a minister, to offer pastoral care to those who were lonely and in many cases isolated as well. A vital work of pastoral carers is to visit people in hospital. Even in a busy hospital environment people can feel extremely vulnerable and lonely. Sheila Forth shared with us her work as a hospital visitor and how immensely rewarding it is.

Members at Hunstanton church put on a splendid lunch for which we were most grateful and also kept us going with coffee and biscuits! A few of our party managed to fit in a short walk to find the sea!

Our afternoon session began with the Rev. Andrew Maguire and Elizabeth MacLeod sharing with us how, throughout the ages, certain people have deliberately isolated themselves to lead a life of prayerful solitude to increase their own spiritual depth and commitment but also to pray for others. In their solitude they were aware of God’s presence and, devoting their lives to prayer, made spiritual sacrifices. The Rev. Kim Nally had reminded us that solitude is when you’re happy to be alone.

Our day finished with a simple, yet powerful, service of Holy Communion led by the Rev. Kim Nally. It was an appropriate way to end as we shared in this act of worship.

Again our thanks to the members at Hunstanton for their welcome, hospitality and care, making sure that our physical needs were met.

Frances Singleterry

Patience is the ability to let your light shine after your fuse has blown out.

My wife said to me, “Don’t let your mind wander. It’s too small to be let out alone!”

Downham Market

Methodist Church Choir

Presents



Music for the Christmas Season

On

Friday, 20th December

At

7 p.m.

In

The

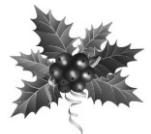
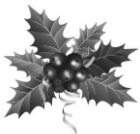
Church

Retiring Collection

In aid of

Downham Market Food Bank

Light refreshments will be served afterwards



Around the churches



Dersingham

The Coffee and Chat sessions on the Seven Deadly Sins are going well and have provoked interesting discussions. The October Coffee morning raised nearly £250 which will be shared between church funds and Vasculitis UK. The proceeds of the coffee morning on the 30th November will be shared between church funds and Diabetes UK. It will have a Christmas theme and we shall also be supporting the Christmas Tree Festival at the parish church in Dersingham at the beginning of December by decorating a tree.

On the 22nd December we will be welcoming our own minister, the Rev. Kim Nally to our pulpit in the morning, and the evening will be our annual Carols by Candlelight Service. The Christmas Day service will take place at 10.30 a.m. as usual. There will be no evening service on the 29th December. Our Covenant Service will take place on the second Sunday in January this year and will be led by the Rev. Kim Nally.

Rosemary Caink

Downham Market

I can't moan about the temperature any more as we are now into November, a month notorious for its miserable weather. Having said that we have had some gloriously sunny days when our walks in Shouldham Warren have been a pure delight with all the beautiful autumn colours. However, no one is thinking about gardening now, so I've suspended my plant stall till the Spring, except perhaps for a few colourful house plants. Meanwhile our Saturday coffee mornings increase in popularity with more than one hundred people last week; perhaps a free coffee for the 100th one in and even a slice of cake if we get to 200. While our fundraising and fellowship activities are going well, we are getting very frustrated with all the red tape to get planning permission for the double glazing we wish to install, I thought the government was encouraging us to go green and save energy, but this does not seem to have reached the lower ranks of officialdom. With the terrific hike in the cost of heating we must press on and hope our second application is approved, (all this red tape is money down the drain which we have to work jolly hard to make). Never mind, apart from the fund raising, the coffee mornings have

been worthwhile for the fellowship shared and the friendships made and most of the folk who come for the first time end up making it a weekly date.

Work also continues for our Christmas Fair on 30th November. Raffle and games prizes are coming from local businesses who kindly sponsor us, and schools will soon have packs of leaflets to go out in the school bags so that, providing the weather is kind, we should have a bumper crowd coming through our doors. Do come and join us to enjoy a fun day and make your Christmas present buying easier and not so expensive.

Could I appeal again, on behalf of Churches Together, for help on Tuesday 17th December at 6.30 p.m. in packing the Christmas hampers sent out to needy folk and also for help during the day to collect the food from the supermarkets. Please phone secretary Alex on 384474 if you can help in this way. Also by the time the December edition of Rejoice appears we will, hopefully, have had one fund raising for the food bank carol sing at Tesco and the second big sing will be on Wednesday 18th December.

More music for Christmas with our church choir on Friday 20th December at 7.00pm, also in aid of the food bank, and on Tuesday 17th Downham Market Choral Society is giving a concert of Christmas music with proceeds going to the children's hospice (EACH),

Volunteers will be laying on the usual Christmas lunch on Christmas day for those who would otherwise be alone. Please check the leaflet on our notice board to see if you qualify and to book your meal by 17th December.

Our Sisterhood group, having joined with the St. Edmund's ladies for their Advent Service, will hopefully be joined by some of them for our last meeting of this session on 11th December for a Christmas get together. We then restart our meetings in March, in the expectation that the worst of the winter weather will be over by then though it didn't work this year, but we shall see.

From the fellowship at Downham Market we wish everyone a happy, healthy and peaceful Christmas.

Joan Macey

Ladies Friendship Circle

Mr Andy Malcolm came to talk to us about The Deep Sea Fishermen's Mission. We don't realise how many fishermen die whilst out to sea and the mission looks after their families and friends. This is a charity for which we collected during the evening and gave them £56.00 and also a cheque for £80.00 which had been made at a Bring and Buy evening.

Our December meetings are on Wednesday 4th December when we are going to make a Christmas Card. 18th December is our Christmas Evening starting at 7pm when we will have carols etc and nibbles.

Please Note: WE HAVE NO MEETINGS DURING JANUARY.
Happy Christmas to you all.

Margaret Fox

St Faith's

Business was brisk at the St Faith's Church Christmas Fair on November 16th as young and old crowded into the Church Rooms to tour the stalls and enjoy a cup of tea and slice of home-made cake as they chatted with friends. The fair is always a popular event and this year was no exception. As well as being a successful social event for the Gaywood community, it was also a success financially raising £1474 (correct at the time of going to press) beating last year's total of £1307.

The fair was officially opened by Gaywood Methodist Minister, the Rev Andrew Maguire and his wife, Helen. Mr Maguire thanked all those who had worked behind-the-scenes in preparing for the Fair and welcomed the many visitors. Sincere thanks were also expressed, on behalf of St Faith's church members, to Jackie Austin, chair of St Faith's fund-raising group, who is stepping down from her voluntary role after several years in the post. During her time at the helm major fund-raising events, including the Grand Garden Fete in the summer and a Spring Fair in March, have raised thousands of pounds for church funds.

Among the attractions at the Fair was a visit by Father Christmas in his Grotto and face-painting for children.

Mrs Austin said that she was delighted at the Fair's success, both from a financial point of view and as an event for the wider Gaywood community to enjoy.

"People were waiting outside for the doors to open at 2pm and as soon as it was officially opened there was a lovely, family atmosphere of fellowship and fun. As it was the last event under my direction, I was thrilled that it proved to be such a success. It happens as the result of a lot of hard work by a small group of people on the organising group whose efforts ensure that it all happens as planned," said Mrs Austin.

Mrs Austin will continue in her role as a Senior Methodist Steward at St Faith's and Methodist Lay Preacher.

Members of St Faith's Anglican and Methodist congregations will have an opportunity later this month to say farewell to St Faith's curate, the Rev. Libby Martin, who is leaving the parish after four years to take up a new appointment as Rector of the Glaven Valley Group where the parishes include Blakeney and Letheringsett on the popular North Norfolk coast..

An afternoon farewell tea for Libby is being held in Gaywood Church Rooms at 4pm on December 22nd. The tea will be followed at 6.30pm by the ever-

popular Carols by Candlelight. During the service, some of the best-loved traditional Carols will be sung.

During her time at Gaywood, Libby has become a well-known figure in the Gaywood community as she has quietly carried out her role being particularly involved with some local schools, St Faith's Prayer Shawl ministry, the Open the Book project at local schools and Godly Play.

She is due to be officially inducted and instituted into her new ministry at Blakeney Church by the Bishop of Lynn, the Rt Rev. Jonathan Meyrick in mid-January, the exact date yet to be confirmed.

It will be a case of eyes down on Friday, December 6th at 6.30pm, when a fun evening of bingo run by Gaywood Scouts will be held in Gaywood Church Rooms. Entry is free and refreshments will be available. All are welcome.

The Advent and Christmas season sees a busy schedule of special services at St Faith's Church.

During December a large number of schools in the extensive Gaywood parish will be attending School Carol services in the beautiful interior of St Faith's Church.

Sundays December 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd at 5pm will see a short, reflective service with Taize songs at the Holy Family Church in Field Lane, Gaywood. The Church is located next to St Martha's Roman Catholic Primary School. All are welcome to attend.

On December 8th at 8.45am at St Faith's will be the annual Gift Service.

During the service stocking-filler gifts will be received. The gifts will be distributed to 0-5-year old children attending the Vancouver Children's Centre at Centre Point on the Fairstead Estate.

Another popular service with children and their parents and friends is the Christingle Family Service. The service is being held on December 15th at 3.30pm and everyone is welcome to attend.

As the busy preparations for Christmas come to an end on Christmas Eve, there is time for peaceful reflection at the Round the Crib service at 4.30pm. The service is suitable for all ages and all are welcome.

At 11.15pm (please note the start time) Christmas Eve there is an opportunity to welcome the new-born Christ-child in the first Communion at Christmas during the Midnight Communion with Carols.

On Christmas Day at 9am there will be a quiet traditional Christmas Communion. All are welcome.

This will be followed, at 10.30am, by a Christmas morning Family Service. Come along and celebrate the Good News of Christmas with your family and friends. Don't forget to remind children to bring along one of their favourite new toys to show to the congregation.

The Clergy, Wardens, Stewards and members of St Faith's Church at Gaywood wish readers of Rejoice! Magazine a blessed Christmas and a joyous New Year.

Richard Parr

Hilgay

I would like to say "Thank you" to Pauline and Elinor and all those who took part in the excellent Remembrance service. The memory will be with my husband and me and many others in the coming years. God bless and guide us all.

Gwen Dearsley

Terrington St Clement

Saturday 7th December from 10am - 2pm will be our Christmas Coffee Morning. There will be stalls, a raffle, light lunches and refreshments. All welcome.

MWiB - (Network) - June and Elizabeth Knox visited recently and gave a talk with illustrations about their cruise along the Danube. CATS/Kits Youth Club held a 'Dress in your PJs or 'Onesies' Evening.' The sponsorship for this, combined with the cake sale proceeds, was halved and raised just over £90 for Children In Need and a further £90+ for our Youth Work here at Terrington. Well done to our group of 4 helpers and the 9 children/young people who took part. The idea for the dressing theme came from Daniel aged 9 from Youth Club and Junior Church, who said that he wanted to see Wendy in her pyjamas!!!!

Southery

We were joined by our friends from St. Mary's, for our Remembrance Sunday Service on the 10th November, it was led by the Rev. Maurice Stafford. The theme for the Service was beating swords into ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks. It was encouraging to see so many people in our little Church; it is good to see so many paying their respects to those who gave so much for us and their Country. The collection amounted to £85.90 which was given to the Earl Haig Fund .

At the memorial, we were joined by a lot more villagers. The roll was called and two minutes silence was observed. Wreaths were laid by all the organisations of the village; the first one was for the British legion, laid by Mr H Flack, a "Bevan boy". These were people who were conscripted to work in the

coal mines, to help fuel the War effort, and were just as important as all the other organisations involved. It is good to see them recognised.

Our members are supporting our friends of St. Mary's with their food bank appeal. Also we continue to support other charities; our jars of cash for jars of water, recently realized £20.

Southery Methodist Church invites you to a *TASTE OF INDIA*. Join us on Wednesday 26th February 2014, at 6pm for 6.30. This will be an Indian type meal to raise funds for NEW DAWN INDIA. All profits from the evening will go direct to the charity. All the moneys raised for this charity go directly to support the health and education of the slum children of Madurai. There will be Ladies in saris present who have lots of knowledge of the Charity and the Vidiyal Centre in Madurai, The speaker for the evening will be the Rev. Andrew Sankey, who has recently been to India and Vidiyal, I am sure he has much news and many photos to share. Also there will be a raffle with Indian and English prizes.

Tickets will £8.00 per person. Phone me on 01366 378413 to book, There are limited places, first come first served but bookings are confirmed on payment.

Walter Cornwell.

Pott Row

We are once again holding our TREE FESTIVAL. Christmas trees will be on display, with stalls of gifts, books, cakes and a Raffle.

Times are.....

FRIDAY and SATURDAY 6th/7th December

10.00 am till 4.00 pm

SUNDAY 2.00pm - 4.0 pm with Refreshments.

Our CAROL SERVICE will be on Sunday 8th at 6.30 pm led by JACKIE AUSTIN. We hope to see you there.

Fellowship Breakfast at Pott Row - Saturday 9th November

“When two or more are gathered together in my name I shall be in the midst of them.”

So the good book tells us - well it was well past the two or three that morning! In the schoolroom were tables set the length of the room with tablecloths, plates, knives and spoons neatly arranged. In a regimental line there were pots of jam, honey, marmalade, peanut butter and Marmite - what more could we wish for?

On another table was the source of supply – bread, cereals and what would become the overworked toaster, along with glasses for fruit juice and coloured bowls to choose for your cereal. Soon breakfast was well underway and the pleasant noise of chatting and passing things to each other was heard.

Maggie worked hard to grant our wishes for tea or coffee and Terry kept our plates well supplied with toast.

When all had finished the clearing system was put into action and in no time at all everything was cleared, tables put away, and out in the kitchen the crockery was dealt with. Chairs were arranged in a circle and hymn books were given out. We were all seated with our eyes on Catherine, who informed us she was not giving us a sermon as she had been told that it was not done at Circuit Fellowship breakfast! [laughter] We commenced with a prayer before singing the first hymn, after which Barbara read Psalm 49. We then had a time of prayer, before finishing with another hymn and the blessing.

The organ responded well on its first outing since being rescued from the dump!

So ended a very good and happy breakfast meeting.

Bill Hone

Stanhoe

We are few in number, now down to 6 members, but having our worship numbers enhanced by joining with Burnham Market congregation - alternate Sundays in each church. Thus we are able to keep a presence in both villages, partly thanks to the faithful members who make this possible by giving lifts to and fro. We are still in good heart in Stanhoe, with finances and a small, easily maintained building in good order, and enough of us to fulfil all the official positions of stewards and treasurer (although there is considerable doubling up)! We are grateful to John Loose, who now plays the organ for us as well as for Burnham Market.

We held our usual Harvest Festival Service on 22nd September, led by Elizabeth Batstone, and to which we welcomed back Pat and Brian Ogden from their new home in Dereham. After the service the fruit and vegetables and preserves which had adorned the church, were sold off, and the proceeds sent to the Tapping House Hospice Building fund.

A new Bible Study group has been formed, held on alternate Monday afternoons in the Sutton Lea community centre, (many of our members live on the Sutton Lea estate, which is a group of retirement homes in Burnham Market). This has led to new friends coming to worship with us on Sunday and a renewed sense of purpose and spirituality as we share fellowship each Monday. (Of course, we always finish with tea and cake, a

tradition within the Stanhoe Methodist church)! Thanks to Margaret Loose, who cannot attend the meetings, but bakes cakes for us.

Our Christmas Carol service will be held on Sunday morning, 15th December, and Brian Ogden will be coming back to lead it. For the first time in many years, we shall not be holding a service on Christmas Day, due to some members having family commitments elsewhere.

Elizabeth MacLeod

Stow Bridge

Stow Bridge can certainly rejoice with the success of two recent events. It was a lovely sunny afternoon on October 6th when we celebrated our Harvest Thanksgiving, led by Rev. Andrew Maguire. The service was well supported with refreshments afterwards. It added over £200 to our Church funds. Grateful thanks to all who helped.

Also a Fellowship Tea at George and Heather's house was greatly enjoyed on the afternoon of September 1st. Many church family and friends attended and again sincere thanks are extended to helpers and givers and those who attended. This event raised £346.

It was good to read about Terrington St John's 200th anniversary in Grapevine. Well done to all those who help to keep the doors open there.

And what about the wedding in Latvia lasting 26 hours? Reading the report, it was not like weddings in this country.

Both events, here and in Latvia, are great days to look back on. It always brings a smile to my face when I think of our wedding day. I know you would laugh if I told you, so I'll let that rest!

From us all to you all a joyful and peaceful Christmas.

Peter Hewitt

Clenchwarton

I went to the schoolroom on Saturday 19th October to see the latest CMEG productions. Two plays; the first one was "All Together", a northern drama by Stephanie Munden. It amazed me how all the characters were word perfect considering all they had to learn. The acting was so good as well. I could imagine I was really in this home, with father coming back from the First World War, full of how he was looking forward to going back to the mill and how prosperous everything appeared. But things aren't as they appear and eventually, after much trauma, the family go to America for a fresh start. The second was a comedy farce by Bill Sampson, "A Splash of Purple". The setting was a wine drop factory, directed by the E.U. to put into the product what was written on the packet! So wine was added with hilarious results. The two plays complemented each other quite well. Well done. Thank you.

Harold Smith

Growing in God at North Lynn

As we prepare to celebrate our 50th anniversary in North Lynn and continue to consider the future of the building and our mission to the community, we have been asked to write an article on Growing in God.

Central to the life of the fellowship here is a passion for Jesus and a desire to share his gospel with the people around us. We give thanks for all the lives that have been touched and changed by the seeds planted over the last half a century. I, for one, am here today because people shared their love for Jesus with me.

It reminds me that Jesus should be at the centre of all that we do and our first priority should be our relationship with him. Everything else flows naturally from this.

Since Jean and I first felt called to North Lynn we have invited others to join for fellowship at our house where we have prayed, worshipped, studied and shared together. Currently there are seven of us meeting regularly and as most are new to the group, I have felt that it was important for people to share something of their journey of faith. We need to learn to trust one another and to be open with each other. Sharing together strengthens our fellowship, but it means that we make ourselves vulnerable and that takes time.

We are also trying to be open to the work of the Holy Spirit. As we worship and pray together, we invite Him to come and speak to us. In addition to studying the Word, it is important to allow the Holy Spirit the time and space to minister to us. This might involve long periods of silence or prayer, which again takes time for some of us to be comfortable with.

Throughout the week, various activities take place at the Church. On Wednesday mornings our Anglican friends lead morning prayers; the parents and toddlers group meet in the afternoon and Brownies and Guides in the evening. On Thursdays, people from the community join us for 'Coffee on the Couch' in the morning and the Women's Fellowship meets in the afternoons. Later on, a dozen or so people get together for a Community Meal in the early evening. All these groups are great for getting to know people in the community and offer opportunities for us to share our faith and pray for our friends.

Some of these people have come along occasionally to the Filling Station; an alternative worship event held at 5pm on the second Sunday of the month. We meet in the hall, where people from the community groups are used to being, and share food and drink together. We try and make the worship more

interactive and as informal as possible to help people feel more welcome and relaxed.

For the past couple of years, we have all been looking seriously at the future of the building and how we can work together with our Anglican brothers and sisters. It is important that the premises are fit for purpose and are inviting and welcoming to the community. However, it is also important to remember that the building is a tool to enable the work of God's mission.

At the beginning of September, I was made redundant and have felt strongly called to use this opportunity to get more involved in the mission to the community. Firstly, this has been a call to renew and deepen my prayer life. It also has been a call to take that prayer out into the community. At the moment, this has not developed any further than prayer-walking. This is proving a real battle.

Our real vision is that this will extend to a prayer ministry in the community. I feel that the Holy Spirit has much work to do in my life before I am ready for that. But we continue to trust God for that breakthrough, when He will come in power and transform the lives of the people of North Lynn to the glory of His Name!

Stephen Harrington.

Notes from the Super

As part of our District discipleship programme, '*Journey into Faith*', 2014 has been designated as the Year of Prayer. During the year we hope to focus on the need for each disciple to be engaged in a living relationship with God that is undergirded with the communion of prayer.

The book written by John Pritchard that you should have received at or after Synod, is one of the tools that might be used during the year, with small groups - perhaps at Lent?

A small planning group is in place and they would be pleased to receive any ideas you have. Also, each Circuit is encouraged to hold a 'Year of Prayer' event during 2014.

There will be a District event on **Saturday, 10th May 2014**. The details are not yet known but you are asked to note this date and - whenever possible - refrain from organising other events that day so that people thought the District don't have to choose between events.

Your co-operation is appreciated.

It has also been decided that there will be a District Event to mark the end of the current District Chair's ministry in East Anglia on **Saturday, 5th July 2014** at St. Faith's School, Trumpington Road, Cambridge. This event will be **in the afternoon** and conclude with a **picnic** in the school grounds. More information will be available nearer that time but please will you reserve the date in your diary and encourage members and churches to see this as an opportunity for further sharing and fellowship with friends old and new across the District?

A Saturday Night Out

How good it was to see the hall at Downham Market relatively full for Brian Bannister's concert. The adult performers were all Guildhall trained and treated us to a varied programme.

Joan Hooke's first item on the piano was one of my favourites; The Entertainer. The others she played were all well known and well received.

Many of the audience already knew George Braun with his lovely voice and his accompanist Sandra Woods. He sang some beautiful traditional songs.

Although the grown-ups were brilliant, for me the highlight of the evening was Hilgay Youth Silver Band. They played a medley of lively songs, with talent and enthusiasm. Some of them were almost invisible behind their instruments but their expressions and the concentration on their faces were a joy to behold. Their leader and trainer, Brian Doy, is doing a fantastic job with them.

The concert was to raise funds for a village library in Bangladesh. It was being organized by a young man who worked in the petrol station while he was studying. Brian had befriended him and had returned to Bangladesh with him, staying for a few weeks. It was a free concert but donations amounted to £368.

Thank you to all the performers and to Brian.

Barbara Foster

Those who jump from bridges in Paris must be in Seine! (Guess who!)

Which meeting shall I attend?

I recently chaired a Church Council meeting and one of the members attending should have been at their poetry class but sent the following by way of apology to their Poetry Group. I asked permission to submit it to Rejoice as it tickled me!

Revd. Marie Whitcombe

Apologies

I wish I was with you this evening
Reading poems by great and anon.
The wonderful sonnets of Shakespeare
And verses by others long gone.
I love the poems of John Betjemen
He speaks his mind with no fears
If you want something a little lighthearted
You cannot beat reading Pam Ayres.
This evening I'm at a meeting
The Minister will be in the Chair.
We usually start with a reading
And that will be followed by prayer.
With our secretary taking the minutes
And one who our money does treasure
The rest us being a motley crew
A Circuit steward thrown in for good measure.
We'll discuss the matters arising
Make plans for December to May
When we get to 'Any other business'
I mostly have something to say.
We join in the grace - meeting over.
Feeling happy if things went alright.

I'm sorry I cannot be with you.
Our Church Council is meeting tonight!

Bring on the young people

I have just returned from morning worship at Downham. It was designated a youth service, had young people taking part, with hymns written for them and most people left the building with a smile on their face!

The theme was "Talents". We had the parable with an animated film clip and a meditation that tied all the loose ends together.

Emily played Gary Barlow's Love Tonight. She used her talent, her memory as she had no music and her delight at being with us was obvious. Daniel annihilated Ralph at badminton and then went on to explain how the game can help in later life; competing, cooperating, learning to win and to lose with grace and tact. The Boys' Brigade shared their drumming skills.

Young people led the prayers, thanking God for talents and asking for His help to use them in His world. For one young man it was a great achievement to read in public. But it's not just the young who need to think, use their talents and develop skills. We should all be out there in God's world, sharing, helping and living as God intended.

Some of us are young at heart if not in years.



We also sang Happy Birthday to a lovely lady. Sharmie is now 103!
Congratulations!

Barbara Foster

A Thought for Christmas

If I could catch a rainbow I would do it just for you
And share with you its beauty on the days you're feeling blue.

If I could build a mountain you could call your very own;
A place to find serenity, A place to be alone.

If I could take your troubles I would toss them in the sea,
But all these things, I'm finding, are impossible for me.

I cannot build a mountain Or catch a rainbow fair,
But let me be what I know best,
A friend who's always there.



Any items for the **February** edition should be with the editor by **January 10th**, (Hospital appointment!) earlier if possible. All items received by email will be acknowledged.

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Last year I told the children there was no Father Christmas. This year I'm telling the wife!! Aaaaah!

West Norfolk Methodist Circuit Diary

December 2013 onwards

Thursday December 5th Carol Singing at Tesco Downham Market
7pm

Friday/Saturday December 6th/7th Tree Festival at Pott Row 10am

Saturday December 14th Fellowship Breakfast 8.30 am at
Downham Market

Wednesday December 18th Carol Singing at Tesco Downham
Market 7pm

Friday December 20th Choir Christmas Concert at Downham
Market 7pm

2014

Saturday January 11th Fellowship Breakfast 8.30 am at Southery

Saturday February 8th Fellowship Breakfast 8.30 am at
Wimbotsham

Saturday March 8th Fellowship Breakfast 8.30 am at St Germans

Saturday May 10th District Event

Saturday, July 5th Farewell Picnic for GT at Cambridge

*A Blessed Christmas and a Peaceful and
Fulfilled New Year to All the Circuit.*

