

# Rejoice!

December 2017/January 2018



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



Dear Friends,

I am writing this just a few days after returning to work following my three months sabbatical. The sabbatical was a wonderful opportunity for stepping back a little. Over the months prior to its start in August there was a sense of anticipation and there was a lot of preparation to be done to try to make sure that everything was in place, both in terms of covering my work in the churches and also in terms of my personal preparations to try to make sure that the sabbatical would be a worthwhile experience. At the beginning of 2017 there were days when the sabbatical seemed quite a long time in the anticipation. Once it began the first few weeks felt as though they were going by at a steady pace, but then, after the first half had gone by, time seemed to pass very swiftly for the final six weeks. The beginning of November was upon us in next to no time and now I have returned to my responsibilities in the churches.

As I write this with Advent just a couple of weeks ahead, and then Christmas - themes related to “time” and its passing are quite relevant. In Advent there is an emphasis on times of patient waiting and expectation. Not only are we patiently awaiting the coming of Christmas 2017, but we are reminded of how, for many generations, there was a sense that God had promised a coming Saviour. So, in our churches, we will probably sing the hymn which begins “Long ago, prophets knew, Christ would come, born a Jew”. That time of waiting and expectation came to its fulfilment when the baby Jesus was born and laid in the manger of Bethlehem.

But the time of waiting and expectation had not come to a final end. In Advent we also look towards the final coming of God’s Kingdom when the hopes glimpsed in Jesus of a coming Kingdom of Peace and Joy will finally be fulfilled. Another of our beautiful Advent hymns speaks of how “Weary was our heart with waiting, and the night-watch seemed so long”. There are certainly days when it feels like that, and we are tempted to join with the psalmist in asking “How long, O Lord, how long?”.

The Advent hope is that, just as God's promises were fulfilled in the coming of Jesus, so too God will be faithful in his promise for the final coming of His Kingdom.

In the beautiful final vision of God's Kingdom contained in the Book of Revelation we read: 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.'

How long will that be in the coming? We cannot know, but the Christian hope is that one day we will be able to look back and wonder how we could ever have doubted that the days of waiting would pass and God's promise would be fulfilled.

With good wishes for Advent and Christmas,

Andrew

**ADVENT  
ADVENT REFLECTION GROUP  
AT SOUTH WOOTTON**

**Led by Rev. Catherine Dixon**

**Looking at**

**NAMES FOR THE MESSIAH**

**10AM -APPROX 11AM**

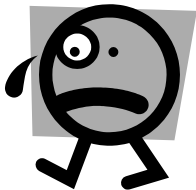
**COMMENCING NOVEMBER 28<sup>TH</sup>**

**Then 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup> December**

**ALL ARE WELCOME TO ONE OR ALL**

## Xmas

There is a curious Christian myth  
Which says you mustn't use  
The shortened form of 'Xmas':  
I know some who refuse:  
It's wrong to leave out Christ, they say,  
It's modern, slick, commercial...  
But here's a bit of history,  
By no means controversial:  
X is simply Greek 'CH',  
An old abbreviation:  
Christ's in 'Xmas' - more in fact,  
Than in our celebration.



Any items for the **FEBRUARY** edition should be with the editor by **JANUARY 12<sup>th</sup>**, earlier if possible. **If you don't get an acknowledgment of emails PLEASE enquire if I have received them as some articles have found their way into my spam bin which I don't check very often!**

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# Praying together in the Circuit

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; Isaiah 9: 6  
Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift. 2 Cor. 9:15

Human and divine, humble yet sublime  
*Emmanuel, God with us.*

Divine gift of grace to the whole human race  
*Jesus, our Saviour.*

Mercy outpoured, human beings restored  
*Jesus, our Redeemer.*

A new life to live, a new gift you give  
Spirit divine, in your life and mine  
*Jesus, ascended, victorious, glorious Lord.*

You will come again, evermore to reign.  
*Jesus, King of Kings and Lord of Lords.*

Our lives we bring, your praises we sing.  
*Jesus, Name above all names, worthy of all praise.*

The government will be on his shoulders.  
and he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of  
his government and peace there will be no end. Is 9:7-8

Lord our Comforter, Prince of Peace,  
comfort each person who is overcome with sorrow and loss.  
Hold them in your peace; embrace them in your love.

Emmanuel,

God with us, God for us, God within us.

We pray for children and families. for all people  
to experience the wonder, joy and peace of Christmas  
celebrating the greatest gift of love, divine love meeting human need.  
For children in our Circuit churches and activities planned for them.  
We pray for children in need, throughout the world,

in need of tender loving care, security protection, provision.  
For those living with disabilities, complicated health issues,  
those receiving palliative care.  
For all who respond to their needs and care for them.

For the children who will receive shoeboxes filled with gifts  
sent in love to bring them joy and happiness.  
Lord, bless these children with provision for their everyday needs.  
May we be generous in giving, and they be blessed in receiving.

For children everywhere, we pray that stumbling blocks will be  
removed and stepping stones will be in place to lead all children  
forward to enjoy their childhood in safety and wellbeing.

Jesus put a child in the centre of the room, then cradling the little  
one in his arms he said "Whoever embraces one of these children as I  
do embraces me, and far more than me - God who sent me"  
Mark 9:36-37

Prayers have been requested for:-

Derek + Viv, Stephanie, Janice, Amy, Trisha, Linda, Andrew, Mavis,  
Julia., Rachel, Judy, Dulcie + Neill, Kelly, Kath, Stephen + Victoria,  
William, Tom, Ken + Norma, Brian Osborne, Sarah. Willie receiving  
treatment and for Valerie, his wife.

All those we know suffering at home or in hospital

"Sadly, in this modern, politically correct age, we are in danger of  
losing the Christian spirit at Christmas. We can't let that happen:  
we need our faith."  
*quote, Brian Blessed*

# Around the churches



## TERRINGTON ST CLEMENT

### Christmas Coffee Morning

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 10 a.m -1.00p.m

Light lunches, raffle, cakes, bric-a-brac

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 10.30 a.m.

Family Advent Carol Service

Led by Rev. Andrew Maguire

All are very welcome



You are also welcome to come to a New Year Party and entertainment

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2.00 – 4.00**

**Tea will be served after 3.00 p.m**

If you would like to lead a game or speak, sing or entertain in any way for a few minutes or just come, please let Helen Maguire or any of our stewards know by 20<sup>th</sup> January please.

We always have a good, fun afternoon together.

Network (MWiB) continues with Angela Bishop telling us about the charity she supports which helps horses and donkeys in distress , here and abroad.

Mary Cumbers shared her testimony with us and how her faith had supported her through all the ups and downs.

Fun to Fit continues on a Monday, new members very welcome. 9.30am to 10.30am

Linda Howling



## WIMBOTSHAM

At our Church Council Meeting held on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> October at 2.30 pm it was reported that four new members have joined us. We will also have some of the members from St Germans joining us after Christmas on the Sundays when there is no service at Stow Bridge. We also have the pleasure of the company of the Methodists who go to Stow Bridge. We are so pleased to see them all; it certainly boosts our congregation. Joan and Nan Reid continue to stay in touch with us. (Nan Reid was a pastoral and hospital visitor for this circuit.)

Mary Rose, Secretary

The theme of our service on 29<sup>th</sup> October was the Lectionary for the day. Mick, Shirley and Margaret read the relevant bible passages and spoke a few words about each. Choosing the worship song "Abba, Father" I spoke briefly about the composer, Dave Bilbrough.

That evening was the Come and Praise service at Downham Methodist - a lovely opportunity to join in fellowship there in lively singing of worship songs. The next one is scheduled for 31<sup>st</sup> January at 6.30 pm. "Beetle ! Beetle !" were the loud shouts in our function room on the evening of 1<sup>st</sup> November. No, we were not being infested with creepy crawlies! It was the Beetle Drive following a very tasty Sausage and Mash Supper organised by our neighbours of St Mary's Church. They are also planning a Pudding Evening (sounds delicious) here at 7 pm on 13<sup>th</sup> December. All are invited - tickets £5 from Liz Wing (01366 388954).

All Saints Day has now passed but with Christmas festivities in mind, what do you know about Saint Nicholas? Nicholas was born during the third century in a village in Turkey. His wealthy parents, who raised him to be a devout Christian, died in an epidemic while Nicholas was still young. Obeying Jesus' words to "sell what you own and give the money to the poor," Nicholas used his whole inheritance to assist the needy, the sick, and the suffering. He dedicated his life to serving God and was made Bishop of Myra while still a young man. Through the centuries many stories and legends have been told of St. Nicholas' life and deeds and why he became so beloved and revered. One story

tells of how he helped a poor man with three daughters acquire a dowry. Mysteriously, on three different occasions, a bag of gold appeared in their home, providing the needed dowries. Nicholas had waited till dark, then rode to the man's home and as he passed by the open window, tossed in bags of gold said to have landed in stockings or shoes left before the fire to dry. This led to the custom of children hanging up stockings on Christmas Eve, eagerly awaiting gifts from Santa Claus. (Sourced from [www.saintnicholas.org](http://www.saintnicholas.org))

Very soon we will be in the midst of the Christmas season and celebrating the wondrous birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. The "Twelve Days of Christmas" follow, leading us to Epiphany traditionally commemorating the arrival of the wise men, who had travelled to see Him.

Then we will be on our way into 2018 with our New Year resolutions. Travelling along life's road together, we send warm greetings to all of love, joy and peace.

Mary Davies

## **ST GERMANS**

As many of you will already be aware, our chapel will close at the end of December after 117 years in the present building and a history going back at least 180 years. Whilst in one way this is a sad time for the remaining members, we remember the words of Isaiah 43:18b-19 "do not dwell on the past. See I am doing a new thing". Indeed we can give thanks for all that the Lord has done in this place over the years and be sure that he has new plans for each of his people, which he will reveal in his own time and way.

The final service in the chapel will be held on 31<sup>st</sup> December at 3pm and we do hope that many of our friends who may have had connections with the Chapel over the years, will be able to join us as we give thanks for all that past and pray for the future. We also extend an invitation to all to join us for our Carol Service on 24<sup>th</sup> December at 9.30am.

John Houghton

## **HILGAY**

First of all a big THANK YOU to everyone who supported Dominic's Coffee Morning at our home to raise funds for his Mission Adventure to Albania next Easter. It was lovely to see so many people and I am pleased to say the event raised a total of £257:00 towards the expenses of the trip. Thanks again to all who were unable to come but kindly gave donations.

Guild for December will be a Christmas afternoon on December 12<sup>th</sup> at 2pm.

On Christmas Eve the service will begin at 6:30pm and the preacher will be Rev. Maurice Stafford. All are welcome. The service will be followed by Tea/Coffee and mince pies.

Come along to begin your Christmas celebrations.

Pauline Driver.

## **STANHOE**

We are delighted to share with you the good news that Willie Shackcloth has had a good result from his 6 and a half weeks of radiotherapy following a diagnosis of prostate cancer, and it is hoped that after further treatment he will make a complete recovery. He, and his wife Valerie, thank everyone for their prayers. Both have been very conscious of being held in your hearts and the hands of God during the past few difficult months.

Elizabeth MacLeod

## **DERSINGHAM**

The coffee morning at the end of October raised £321.06 towards our Flower Festival expenses. By the time you read this our Christmas coffee morning will have taken place and hopefully raised similar funds for the British Heart Foundation and our own church funds. Another Chicken Foot Evening is planned for Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December. The monthly community lunches continue to be enjoyed for their friendliness and a good meal shared with good company, a

bonus which many people, now on their own, appreciate. The December lunch, on Monday 4<sup>th</sup>, will be preceded by the singing of carols at 11.45am with our minister the Rev. Steve Oliver. Our Candlelit Carol Service will be held on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December at 4pm, will be led by Steve and will be followed by mince pies, tea or coffee. Members of the congregation are being asked to choose the carols for this service. We shall again be celebrating the birth of Jesus with midnight communion on Christmas Eve. This service will start at 11.30pm and again will be led by Steve. The usual Christmas Day morning service will be held at 10.30am and Steve will be on duty again!

Each year Paul Clay comes up with another Christmassy idea for decorating our sponsored tree at our Parish Church's Christmas Tree Festival. This time it is lanterns and a theme of light, so the crayons, felt tip pens, silver and gold glitter and glue are out as we do his bidding and try to remember the 'send in by' date! I am sure time goes faster as we get nearer to Christmas and deadlines approach ever more speedily.

Then it will be the New Year, 2018, and we will be taking part in our Covenant Service at 10.30am on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> January.

May the Peace of Christmas be a reality for us all this year and may 2018 bring peace and happiness to those enjoying neither in this troubled world.

Our coffee morning in January is January 27<sup>th</sup>, in aid of Methodist Missions.

Rosemary Caink

## **DOWNHAM MARKET**

Well into the winter months now, though so far the weather has not been too severe. When living at Shouldham I used to drive to Downham along the Runcion road which leads from the Jolly Brewers to the A10 near the Magpie Centre. If we had ice and snow that road was not cleared and I had to go the long way round along the main roads. I don't think we've had lots of ice and snow for at least four years now and if it does come it's usually after Christmas, so we must

make the most of these sunny days, though the wind has been very strong lately making my river bank walk with my dog hard work. We'll soon be into a new year and remembering this past year whatever it brings.

We have had two special services this month; our Memorial Service for all the friends and loved ones we have lost from Church and then Remembrance Sunday. Our Memorial Service was lit by many tea lights as the names were read out. For the Remembrance Service Meg Cooper had not only arranged beautiful red flowers, but also depicted a trench area with logs and fallen leaves, a helmet, boots, ammunition box and many more souvenirs of the First World War, together with a home guard book, ration books and items from the second world war. This, with the new banner the banner group had made, with masses of poppies, really brought home the effect war has on everyone. My thanks to Meg for all her hard work and I am pleased that she has agreed to take over responsibility for Church flowers in the New Year. Having done the job for nearly fifteen years it really is time for a change and i am relieved to give up a job which involves lots of remembering dates and details. Something has to go when one starts getting forgetful, but I am hoping it is just overload. Our Saturday coffee mornings have continued albeit with quite a few gaps as we have had two craft fairs and an Action for Children morning this month. Sandy, who helps with my plant stall, and I both went down with severe colds after sitting outside till 3.00 at one craft fair so now we are inside for the Winter with only one table for houseplants. I now look forward to the Spring when all the 'dead' plants I have will 'spring' back to life. By then I hope to have sorted my own tiny garden which still resembles a builder's yard though the fencing has been renewed and tall gates installed to keep my dog in, so there is some progress. We still have a good collection of books and bric a brac to choose from as well as the attraction of home made cakes with the refreshments each week so if you have not paid us a visit so far do try to pop in. Some of the bric a brac items would make good Christmas presents for the right person. The social centre too continues to

provide morning refreshments and freshly cooked hot lunches every day, open from 9.30 to 12.30 Mondays to Fridays and there is quite a regular clientele of folk who live alone and enjoy coming to meet their friends while enjoying their lunch. At £4.50 you can't beat it. By the time this edition of Rejoice reaches you our Christmas fair will be over for another year and we will be getting down to our own Christmas preparations.

Churches Together is again this year preparing to assemble Christmas hampers with food for a complete Christmas meal; frozen turkey in cool bags ready to thaw out at the right time with all the trimmings and vegetables as well as toys for the children all geared to the right ages. The hampers are specific to the numbers in the family, as well as solo ones and all this involves a lot of work at the last minute. Help is required with making up the hampers, including wrapping the presents, for the hampers to be delivered on 20<sup>th</sup> December. If you can spare a few hours to help in any way in the preceding weeks please contact Alex Coates on 384404 for further details. We shall be carol singing to fund raise for next year's hampers at Tesco on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup>, Friday 15<sup>th</sup> and Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December. We are vigorously accompanied by Chris Young on his keyboard who also provides the carol sheets, so do come and join us if you can to make sure we look after families in our town who are finding life difficult, and to pass on to the shoppers the real meaning of

I wish you strength and stamina as well as good health to get through all the tasks we have before us which are so enjoyable as long as we are not too overloaded and remember what is really important. Enjoy the music, the fun and fellowship and the peace our faith gives us. Christmas.

Joan Macey

### **Ladies Friendship Circle**

Last Wednesday we had Peter Thorpe with a very interesting slide show on Life in Bulgaria.

Our December meetings are on 6<sup>th</sup> December with Christmas Bring and Buy Auction for our own funds.

20<sup>th</sup> December is our Christmas Evening with entertainment and a buffet supper, Please note this meeting commences at 7pm.  
We don't meet in January so the next meeting will be 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018 at 7.30 with Bingo.

Everyone is welcome at our meetings.

I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year.

Margaret Fox

## **STOW BRIDGE**

Soon we will be reading or hearing the Christmas story. How many times heard it told or perhaps seen it played out by school children? I'm sure it's good to hear again the good news, perhaps touched with sadness; link it with the Queen's speech on Christmas Day, eating and all the other things that go on with the giving of gifts to each other. Our commemorative carol service for the village is on December 15<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 and will be conducted by Rev. Maurice Stafford. Coffee and biscuits will be served at the end.

I have just come across the story of Princess Elizabeth handing a poem to her father, King George VI, which contained the words,

I said to the man, who stood at the gate of the year,

"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.

He replied," Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than the known way."

I'm sure our Queen has done this and held her Christian faith which she values and always mentions in her Christmas message. We can draw from her example of life and the great Christmas story how God intends us to live for ourselves and to help and serve others. But, of course, the greatest example is Jesus.

Those words from the poem by Minnie Haskins were quoted in the 1939 Christmas message and does us all well to listen and act upon it. Not only my recommendation but that of Jesus himself.

Peter Hewitt

## ST FAITH'S

Like other churches across the country December is the month when we gather at a variety of special Christmas services to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ in a humble stable in Bethlehem surrounded by sheep and cattle.

The celebrations start on Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> December when the latest in the popular "new look" coffee mornings is held in the Church Rooms.

This will have a distinct Christmas flavour with stalls selling a variety of festive fare and, of course, there will be coffee, tea and delicious cakes to buy. Do come along and enjoy the family friendly atmosphere and catch up with friends. Everyone is welcome to attend. The start time is 10am and the fun and fellowship continues until 12 noon.

Donations of home-made cakes, scones and other edible delights are always welcome.

The following day, 3<sup>rd</sup> December at 6.30pm, will be the Advent Carol Service. Do make a note in your diaries and come and join us for this beautiful, prayerful service in which we listen to his Word and respond through the singing of traditional Advent-tide hymns.

On December 17<sup>th</sup> at 6.30pm is St Faith's annual Christmas.

Candlelight Carol Service There will be readings and special musical items performed by the choir.

Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> December at 4pm sees the ever-popular Christingle Service. Adults and children wishing to attend this service are advised to arrive in good time because large numbers are expected.

On Christmas Eve there will be a celebration of Holy Communion at 8am and a Holy Communion service at 9.45am.

At 4pm on Christmas Eve will be the Crib service which is always very special.

At 11.15 (please note the start time) will be the Midnight Communion, the first Communion of Christmas, There is usually a large attendance at this service where family and friends come together to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

On Christmas Day there will be a celebration of Holy Communion at



8.30am and a Family Service starting at 10.30am. Children often like to bring the favourite toy gift they received to this service. Christmas Day 2017 will also see a "first" at St Faith's Church because there is to be a traditional Christmas lunch in the Church Rooms for those people who would be spending the special Day on their own.

The Rector, the Rev Julie Boyd, says that this year at St Faith's the church family and also people from the wider community will be celebrating the birth of Jesus, the coming of light but St Faith's will make its response in a new way.

The lunch event starts at 12 noon and those attending will say their farewells at around 3.30pm after watching the Queen's speech on a large screen.

There will be a traditional Christmas lunch menu ending with coffee and mince pies. It is hoped to arrange some entertainment after the meals and before the Queen's speech.

There will be no charge for the lunch, but owing to limited space, it is being organised on a strictly invitation-only basis. Invitations will go out to those people who would most benefit from this gift.

Rector Julie is asking that if you know someone for whom such a gift (a free Christmas Day lunch shared with others) would bring light to an otherwise dark world or a lonely Christmas, then please get in contact with her. You can contact her via the church office on 01553 774916 weekdays between 9am and 12 noon.

Rector Julie says she wishes everyone the joy of the Christmas season and the peace of the Christ child.

At the end of December people can mark the passing of 2017 and welcoming 2018 on Sunday at the 6.30pm service of Methodist Holy Communion.

For full details of St Faith's programme of Christmas services please contact the church office. I would like to wish all readers of Rejoice! magazine a Happy Christmas and a peaceful and healthy New Year. I look forward to writing for you again during 2018.

Richard Parr

## Written at the Menin Gate

Many of us in the Downham Market end of the Circuit will remember Tim Coleman, who came to us as a Lay Worker but is now a Deacon. He's my friend on Facebook and recently posted this poem. He gave me permission to publish it.

### Why are you here?

Fifty five thousand silenced voices cry out,

"Why are you here?"

Is it just another tourist stop? Another photo for the collection?

We will remember them," the young girl cries out.

Remember who?

She knows them not.

Remembrance: like a faded photo of an ancient relative we have never met.

Is that all?

Or is there more?

In the silence, in the space we create by stilling ourselves

We perceive the echo of their lives.

Turn from the earth and in the earth buried

Never to be found in the blood soaked soil beneath our feet

And, just as the last guns fell silent

The last strains of the bugle fade to a distant echo

A wordless question begs of us:

What if we forget?

What if these silenced voices were in vain?

What if we have to send our youth

To find again the truth they found

And pay the same price?

And what is that truth?

What is that nameless horror?

The hell on earth comes

When we fail to look for heaven in our hearts.

And find the love for our brother.  
Then, once more, the blood of Abel seeps in to the soil  
And the curse of Cain becomes our burden  
As we vainly seek the peace that eludes us.

In Humility remember them  
And seek to love all people  
For in truth  
We are our brother's keeper.

Tim Coleman 7.5.17

## JMA

Once upon a time most churches had collectors for JMA, now Junior Mission for All not an association. Downham Market has recently restarted with eight collectors, who received their first ribbon and medal in November at a special All Age Service based on the JMA promise; Learn, pray and serve with the world-wide Church of Jesus Christ. They collected over £700 and are seen here with their donors. Well done them!



## **Andrew Maguire's Sabbatical**

I thought I should share a little news from my recent sabbatical (beginning of August to the end of October).

First of all a big thank you to everybody who shared in the additional responsibilities during this period: to Steve for being Acting Superintendent, to Maurice (and Maggie and Sheila) for making the plan, to Catherine, Gail, Maurice and Becca (and Julie and Karlene) for having additional pastoral responsibilities, to the Circuit stewards and to everybody who helped to make sure that everything went smoothly. I had two particular areas of focus during my sabbatical.

The first was on translating four of the homilies (sermons) of John Chrysostom on St Matthew's gospel from Greek into English. I was able to complete my work on the four homilies on Matthew, chapter 2. Possibly the results may be published at some point, along with the efforts of others around the world who have been sharing in the task of translating all 90 homilies on Matthew. John Chrysostom was a fourth and early fifth century Bishop of Antioch and Constantinople. He has left us hundreds of homilies on different books on the bible and has the reputation of being the "golden mouthed" (that is what Chrysostom mean) preacher of the early Christian centuries. His homilies give us a really interesting perspective on our faith from the viewpoint of somebody who lived all those hundreds of years ago. They also give us fascinating historical material about the state of church and society in those distant days. So Chrysostom writes movingly about the star of Bethlehem and the monks of the Egyptian desert. He also has some harsh words (as well as sometimes encouraging words!) for the men and women in his congregation. He says what he thinks, in no uncertain terms, about the men who spent too much time at the salacious shows that were popular in Antioch at the time, and the women who spent too much time worrying about their make-up. I also did a little more research into the Anglican clergyman who prepared the 19<sup>th</sup> century edition of the Greek text we have been using as a basis for the translation. Frederick Field was a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge and also the Rector of Reepham (Norfolk) for over 20 years. He retired to Norwich and was buried in the Earlham Road Cemetery following his death in 1885. He was a man clearly devoted to his duties as a clergyman and a scholar. In the Norfolk Records Office there are some boxes containing his sermon notes from Reepham.

There is also a photo of his study at Reepham (which had a painting of Oliver Cromwell on the wall as Field was descended from Cromwell). I managed to locate the house where he lived in Norwich in the Parish of Heigham and also found his grave in the Earlham Road cemetery, not far from where he lived. The grave was rather sadly overgrown and neglected considering that he was a man in whose honour there are plaques on the walls both of Trinity College, Cambridge and the Church in Reepham. Bushes and small trees have grown all around the grave and it was covered in ivy. But Helen (yes she was helping me to track down the grave) and I were quite excited when we carefully peeled back some of the ivy and saw his name and the inscription:-

Rev Frederick Field M.A. L.L.D.

1801-1885

A Great Patristic Scholar and one of the Company  
Appointed For The Revision of the Authorised Version  
of the Old Testament Scriptures.

He laboured and ye are entered into his labours.

Frederick Field did not marry and so there have been no offspring to tend the grave, but it still seems a little sad that the resting place of such a distinguished, but gentle, scholar should be so neglected.

The other area of focus during my sabbatical was some family history research. This turned out to be not quite so fruitful and a particular line of enquiry I had been following proved, on further investigation to be ill-founded. It was, however, all very interesting and I now know a great deal more about how to use the Ancestry and Findmypast websites, and my knowledge about different kinds of DNA tests has increased hugely. It was also good to have a little more time to spend with Helen and my family. Helen and I were able to go to several concerts and to attend services in not too far distant Anglican churches. We spent a week on holiday near Sheringham with one of our sons and his wife and our granddaughter, Helena (one in November). We were also able to be present, in a slightly more relaxed frame of mind than normal, for her baptism in Guildford.

A sabbatical is a very special opportunity offered by the Methodist Church to its ministers. I very much valued this opportunity and endeavoured to use the time fruitfully.

Andrew

## ST NICHOLAS

St Nicholas of Myra (270 – 343) aka Santa Claus (a Dutch derivative of his name). He had a reputation for secret gift-giving, such as putting coins in shoes left out for him. He was the son of wealthy Christian parents but gave away the whole of his inheritance to help the needy. He is patron saint of children, but also of sailors, merchants, archers, thieves, pawnbrokers and students. Nicholas became Bishop of Myra at an early age. Under the Roman emperor Diocletian, who ruthlessly persecuted Christians, he suffered for his faith, was exiled and imprisoned. On his release he attended the Council of Nicea in AD 325, so was one of the signatories of the Nicene Creed which we recite in Church almost every Sunday. When we say “True God from true God, begotten not made, of one Being with the Father” it is an echo of that Council whose purpose was to disclaim a heresy called Arianism which affirmed that Jesus was a created being and not fully God. It is said that Nicholas was so angry with Arius that he walked up to him and slapped his face.

We do not have many details of the life of St Nicholas but legends and stories fill the gap. There are two that led to sailors adopting him as their patron saint. The first tells of a sailor who fell into the sea. St Nicholas drew the sailor out of the water and placed him safely on the deck of the ship.. The second story involves a storm so violent that the ship’s mast began to crack. St Nicholas appeared, grasped the mast and made it secure.

My favourite tells of a widowed merchant who had fallen on hard times. With no dowry she would find no husbands for her daughters. Nicholas heard of the family’s desperation. One night he went to the house and threw a bag of gold through the window. Now the eldest daughter had a dowry. The next night he tossed another bag of gold through the window, a dowry for the second daughter. The third daughter received a dowry in the same way. One version of the story says that they were three golden balls, which is reputedly the origin of the pawnbrokers’ sign. I like the variant which tells how Nicholas threw his gifts down the chimney and they landed in stockings which had been left out to dry. A nice tale for Christmas Eve.

These accounts help us to understand his extraordinary character and extreme generosity. It gives us something to live up to.

Feast Day 6<sup>th</sup> December

John Garfoot

# ***Clenchwarton Methodist Church***

## ***Christmas Tree Festival 2017***

*Weekend of December 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>*

*Saturday 10am to 7pm,*

*Sunday 1pm to 6pm.*

*There will be entertainment by local bands, the  
Flukes on Saturday and the Tildens on Sunday  
from 2.30pm*

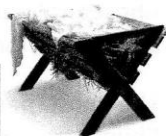
*Light refreshments.*

*Free entry*

*We would love to see you*



# Terry's Word Search



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

**42 words  
for  
December  
& January**

Words are  
up, down,  
backwards,  
forwards or  
diagonal.  
Unused  
letters spell  
out my  
message.

**Terry Bray**

9

Advent	Christmas	Gabriel	Joseph	Shepherds
Angels	David's city	Gold	Manger	Sign
Baby	Donkey	Gum resin	Mary	Smyrna
Bethlehem	Eighty miles	Hay	Myrrh	Stable
Birth	Egypt	Heavenly	Nazareth	Strips of
Carols	Epiphany	singing	New year	cloth
Cave	Escape	Herod	No room	Wise men
Census	Flee	Innkeeper	Perfume	Yule
Choral	Frankincense	Jesus	Sages	

**Acknowledgements to The Crossing magazine and Sylvia Perkins**





**REV STEVE OLIVER**

**JOIN ME  
IN THE GOSPEL HOUR EVERY SUNDAY FROM  
9PM  
FOR THE BEST IN HYMN AND SONG  
and  
THE CHRISTIAN ROCK SHOW  
FOR THE BEST IN HEAVY METAL AND ROCK  
EVERY WEDNESDAY 7.30AM – 8.00AM  
FIND ME ON  
[radioheacham.org.uk](http://radioheacham.org.uk)  
(email [revoliver@radioheacham.org.uk](mailto:revoliver@radioheacham.org.uk))**

**Burnham Market Methodist Church**

**Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> December 2017 from 10am**

**Christmas Coffee Morning**

**All are welcome!**



## Oberammergau 2020 Last Chance

Mary Cumbers has been given permission by Rev. Andrew Maguire to organise a CIRCUIT TRIP to the next Passion Play in Oberammergau in 2020.

It will be from 13<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020. 8 days, 7 nights.

It is impossible to get tickets for the play without it being part of a holiday

Needed to make the trip viable is a minimum of 40 people, the more the merrier.

The holiday part will be spent in a hotel beside Lake Garda, single and double rooms available. There will be a coach and boat trip around the Lake, a day trip to Venice, and a day in Verona. There will be a free day from the hotel OR at extra cost a day trip to the Dolomites. On our way to Oberammergau we will visit Innsbruck.

We are in Oberammergau for 2 nights; there are NO single rooms only twin rooms, so be sure you have some one to share your room with.

The cost should be about £ 1,500 per person.

Single room supplement at Lake Garda will be £100 p.p.

Travel insurance is not included, you MUST have repatriation insurance. The company will arrange it for £44.00.

**This is the VERY last chance to join the trip; all applications have to be with the tour company in November.**

If you are interested will you please let Mary know **NOW**

Phone number 01366 727929 or

by email [mary\\_cumbers@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mary_cumbers@hotmail.co.uk)

The trip is open to all comers and WILL go ahead.



## **West Norfolk Methodist Circuit Diary**

### **November 2017 onwards**

Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> November LAST DATE TO BOOK  
OBERAMMERGAU

Saturday December 2<sup>nd</sup> Coffee Morning with traders 10am -  
noon at St Faith's

Saturday/Sunday December 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> Christmas Tree Festival at  
Clenchwarton

Saturday December 16<sup>th</sup> Christmas Coffee Morning 10 - noon at  
London Road

Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> December Christmas Coffee Morning 10am at  
Burnham Market

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December Final Service at St Germans  
2018

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January Coffee Morning at Dersingham

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January New Year Party at Terrington St  
Clements 2pm

