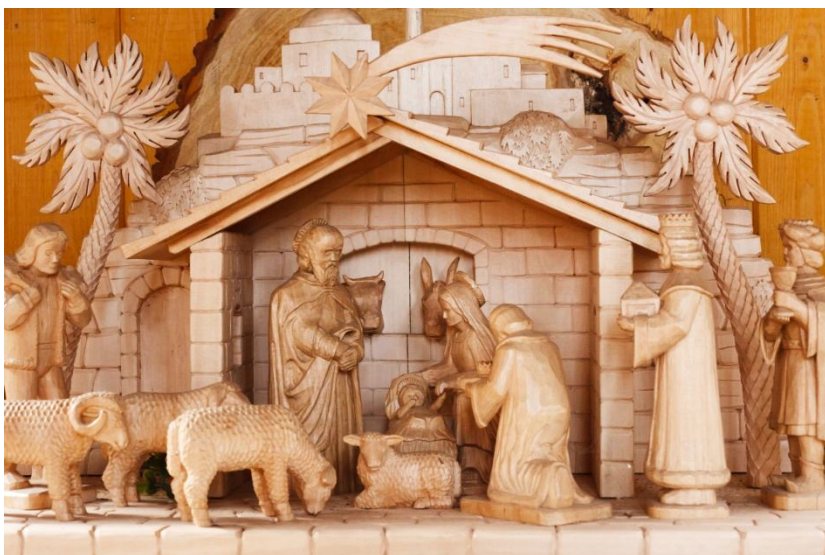


Rejoice!

December 2023/January 2024



The Magazine of the
West Norfolk Methodist Circuit

Rejoice, the Lord is King!

What a wonderful hymn (or song, if you prefer), first published by Charles Wesley in 1744. We know it well from many of our song or hymn books, e.g., Hymns & Psalms 243, Singing the Faith 335, Complete Mission Praise 575, and Songs of Fellowship 482, just to name a few.

Wesley's hymn embodies the Lectionary change, that is almost upon us, from Year A on 26th November, celebrating 'Christ the King' Sunday with words from verse 1: "*Rejoice, the Lord is King!*" Then following on to Year B with words of verse 5: "*Rejoice in glorious hope*" to begin our **Advent Season** on Sunday, the 3rd of December.

Every year, the Lectionary takes us full circle from the anticipation of Messiah, Jesus' birth, his ministry, his suffering and death ending with our remembering of who He was. In the 3 year Lectionary cycle [A, B, and C], we view Jesus through the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and interspersed each year with the Gospel of John.

Yet, where are you this year, today even, with your walk with our Lord, Saviour and friend? At the moment, are you rejoicing that the Lord is king? Is Jesus your glorious hope?

There are many, many things happening in everyone's lives each and every day: sometimes it's fantastic, sometimes devastating, there are expressions of hopefulness, some sorrow, some regret, some bring us quiet assurance, some loud unbelievable alleluias. As the Body of Christ, we connect to our Lord corporately as communities of faith and also, very personally and privately as individuals. Right now, may we be individually and corporately the balm for the other, the friend and stranger, the known and unknown, as we live out Christ's command to love one another.

May you be blessed this day and all your days.

Shalom, Rev Robert, Superintendent

Praying together in the Circuit

God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love – not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be a sacrifice to take away our sins.

1 John 4:9-10

Love came down at Christmas, love all lovely, love divine;

[Christina Rosetti]

O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us we pray;

Cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today.

[Phillips Brooks]

Gracious God, your love for us is wonderful, undeserved and freely given. Your love has touched us, we are saved and redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus, who loved us and gave his life for us.

Lord Jesus, we celebrate your birth, your life on earth, your life given for us, your resurrection, your ascension into heaven, your presence with us, we look to your coming in glory. Holy Spirit moving over the whole world, we pray for revelation of the truth to those who have never known they are loved by the one true God who has provided the way of salvation through his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Holy Spirit prepare their hearts to respond.

Loved with everlasting love, taught by grace that love to know,
Spirit breathing from above, thou hast taught me it is so,
O this full and perfect peace, oh this transport all divine
In a love which cannot cease, I am His and He is mine..

[Wade Robinson]

Sovereign God, we pray for your world and all its people.
Spirit divine, attend our prayers and make a lost world your home,
Descend with all your mighty powers, O come great Spirit, come.

[Charles Wesley]

Lord, hear our prayers

for deliverance from evil for nations and for individuals.

for justice, for respect of human life,

for victims of cruelty and war,

for lives lost and families broken.,

for minds damaged by traumatic experiences.

God of compassion, let your healing love flow.

we pray for Peace on earth and goodwill to all humanity

Your Kingdom come, Your will be done.

Lord, hear our prayers

for areas of the world ravaged by earthquakes, by flooding ,

for people who have lost their homes and their livelihood,

who feel helpless and hopeless,

for help and support in their loss and displacement.

Help of the helpless we pray for hope, for new beginnings.

We pray for your church throughout the world,
for our Circuit Churches, our Ministers and leadership team.

to serve the present age our calling to fulfill,
Spirit led and enabled to do our Master's will.

Day, by day, dear Lord three things we pray
to see you more clearly, love you more dearly
and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen.

[Richard of Chichester]

Prayers have been requested for: Derek, Stephanie, Margie, Janice, Trisha, Linda, Andrew, Mavis and Judy, Kath, Stephen and Victoria, William, Tom, Sarah.
Dudley Pickston, still in hospital. And for Margaret.

Christmas gift Suggestions:

To your enemy, forgiveness.
To and opponent, tolerance.
To a friend, your heart.
To a customer, service.
To all, charity.
To every child, a good example.
To yourself, respect.

Oren Arnold



Articles for February to me
by JANUARY 12th 2024

Mrs Barbara Foster
140 Stow Road
Magdalen, King's Lynn
PE34 3BD
Tel. 01553 811867
E mail rabbit1308@btinternet.com

Bethlehem Quiz

You can look up some of the answers if you wish...but you may not find them all!

- 1 Who visited Bethlehem to anoint David as King of Israel?
- 2 Which prophet wrote 'But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you shall come...' (NIV)?
- 3 "Bethlehem" means
(a) house of sheep (b) house of stone (c) house of bread
- 4 Roughly how many miles is it from Nazareth to Bethlehem:
(a) 40 (b) 80 (c) 150?
- 5 Who was the Moabite woman who found her future husband in Bethlehem?
- 6 Why did Joseph take Mary to Bethlehem for the census?
- 7 Roughly how many miles is it from Jerusalem to Bethlehem?
(a) 6 (b) 20 (c) 50
- 8 Who wrote 'A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey...'? ?
- 9 Who wrote the words of the hymn 'O little town of Bethlehem'?
(a) Charles Wesley (b) C.F.Alexander (c) Phillips Brooks
- 10 Who controls Bethlehem today: (a) the Israelis (b) the Palestinians
(c) the United Nations?

Answers elsewhere in Rejoice. (No cheating!)

Around the churches



Feltwell

At **FELTWEEL METHODIST CHURCH,
COMMUNITY HALL & GARDEN**

We have Tremendous

Tuesdays! Hobby Craft 10am – quilling, card-making, felt, chalk, modelling. And enjoy some light refreshment and chat.



**Table-Tennis Club
now meets**

**Mondays at 7.30pm and Tuesdays
at 1.45pm.**

Any skill level or none. Just come along for an afternoon of fun. It's a load o' laughs, which is good for the heart, and the physical exercise loosens those stiff joints. **All ages** welcome.

WWW.garden –

Wednesdays We Weed,

The Community Garden is always open for anyone to potter, prune, dead-head, trim, repair.

Brownies still meets Thursday evenings.

Our **Youth Café/Club** continues on Fridays with High School students enjoying many different activities, including the ever popular indoor hockey, snooker, table-tennis, darts and no IT!! Several have developed their table-tennis skills markedly. They also enjoy the new Air-Hockey table thanks to circuit youth project funding. A club shop keeps their chocs and pops needs satisfied. Activities in November and December included, Marble Dyeing T'Shirts, Candle Wax Sculpturing and a Music/Disco evening.

The ART EXHIBITION/SALE and CRAFT FAIR – 14th to 21st OCTOBER

This was a most successful event, raising over £350 to help keep the Community Hall in fine fettle. Some of the remaining artwork will go to the local auctioneer to raise more funds.

We are preparing for a Nativity event on 16th December when children can walk through a tunnel of Christmas lights, passing several locally made Nativity scenes before finding a surprise at the end of the tunnel.

We've been donated scores of Christmas decorations which will be sold or raffled at our coffee mornings on 16th December. Then, maybe early in 2024, we'll have a "Has Been" sale/coffee morning for people to pass on those things they no longer want (pre-loved and such)

Our Sunday fellowships have drawn meaningful conversations about how we share God's love in our community. This was also discussed at length during the Circuit Carers' Day which we were delighted to host at Feltwell. Mark 16 v15 made it clear to us that we're not going to get the masses into 'churches' so we must go out into the community to share His love by engaging in service to the community.

We have enjoyed the experience of visiting other churches in the circuit at Circuit Services. The latest was at Dersingham where our Sybil met her cousin, Christine for the first time after being bridesmaid at Christine's parents' wedding. That made Sybil's day!

Find us by scanning this QR code on your Android or iPhone.

We can be contacted on Facebook, Messenger or mobile 07712578721 or by email mikegw15@gmail.com _Mike and Brigette Wilkinson. By the way, WE HAVE A NEW LANDLINE No..... 01842827433, although you will rarely catch us near the phone! We moved to Feltwell June 2022.

Our address is "YR ARDD, 10 Fairfield Way, Feltwell, IP26 4AT".

Stanhoe

As we all pray for peace across the world at this very difficult time, we join our prayers with our fellow worshippers across the Circuit, and wish each other a very happy, loving and peaceful Christmas.

Our autumn season has passed without any particular excitement, except for the groans of those of us compelled to participate in various online courses, and the sighs of relief when we gained our completion certificates. We are not all in the best of health, but continue to enjoy a fulfilling and worshipful community, few as we are. As I write this, much of the country is affected by



flooding - we hope and pray for better winter weather to come, without too much snow and ice.

We look forward to the seasons of Advent and Christmas: Rev. Richman will be leading us into Advent on the first Sunday with a Service of Holy Communion, and on the second Sunday, Rev. Gordon Tonge will be leading our annual Christmas Carol Service. We shall then have services on Christmas Eve, and New Year's Eve, while our Covenant service is set for 28th January 2024, with Rev. Richman.

As always, we are very grateful to those who so faithfully make the sometimes long cross county drive to lead our services. Drive carefully!
Elizabeth MacLeod

Dersingham

On a miserable, cold October afternoon Dersingham folk held a Quiz which brightened up the afternoon considerably. It was suggested that brains would be useful but not obligatory and that there would be fun, tea and coffee and cakes. And so it was. Our own Roger Jackson was quiz master, a good time was had by all and £115 was raised for church funds. The coffee morning at the end of the month raised £321.55 which was divided equally between Canine Partners and church funds.

Now, with a distinct nip in the air as winter approaches, thoughts turn towards Christmas. The coffee morning on Saturday 25th November will be a Christmas Fayre from 10am to 11.30am. The church will be decorated during December and Christmas food items will be collected for the King's Lynn Food Bank during the early part of the month. On Sunday 17th December at 3.00pm we will hold our annual Carols by Candlelight service which will be led by the Rev. Dr. Richman Ncube and on Sunday 24th December at 10.30am our usual morning service, led by Philip and Elizabeth Batstone, will take the form of a Christmas Songs of Praise. On Christmas morning at the usual time of 10.30am the Rev. Rich will lead the Christmas Day service. As usual we will be decorating a tree for the Christmas tree Festival at St. Nicholas Church in the village, this time with angels, a template of which members of the congregation are being encouraged to take home and suitably decorate. So it is glitter and glue time again as we celebrate the amazing event of over two thousand years ago: our God contracted to a span, incomprehensively made Man, as Charles Wesley so eloquently put it.

Rosemary Caink

Pott Row

A poem by a villager

One hundred and forty seven and still going strong
Witness to generations of worship and prayer
A place of contentment and peace for so long
Memoires of its history are placed here and there

Mornings play host to boisterous children
Instilling respect and love at grass roots
Evening gives sanctuary for those who partake in
The relaxing indulgence of yogic pursuits

Where better to host a celebration of plenty
When harvest bestows us with earth's rich fare?
For those poor souls whose basket are empty
We gather donations, our bounty we share.

Bright flowers provide the background to charity
Garlands of colour to gladden the soul
Edible and visual in perfect parity
The calm of the chapel enhancing the whole.

The season eventually draws to a close
Carols and Christmas trees fill us with cheer
The chapel now rests in well-earned repose
Girding her loins for the forthcoming year.

We celebrated the anniversary with a combined Flower Festival / Harvest Festival / Anniversary. The Chapel was open Friday, Saturday and Sunday afternoon with some very creative floral displays on the Theme of 'The Fruits of Creation'. Peter Worrell led our service, various goods and donations were collected for the King's Lynn Night Shelter. We have tried to further support the Night Shelter in recent weeks with a retiring collection as suggested by the Circuit Climate and Justice group.

Looking forward, our Chapel will be decorated with Christmas trees for the first weekend in December, open for visitors Friday and Saturday 10am - 4pm, on Sunday morning and culminating in our Carol service Sunday afternoon at

3 pm. Cakes, crafts, books, jigsaws will all be available for sale, with tea and coffee being served. All are welcome!

Alison Dennis

Heacham

Our Harvest celebrations went very well and we were able to take contributions to the Purfleet Trust. The afternoon tea (great thanks to Marianne and Pauline) was very enjoyable too – not just for the tea but for the social side.

It was also good for some of us to join Dersingham for the quiz. A well-organized event – with good “quiz-mastership” – and excellent cakes. However, I found it a good reminder of the occasions we used to have pre-pandemic, and hope that the Circuit members will feel happy to resume further friendly gatherings – with no more fear.

Future plans for Heacham are:

2nd December 2.30 – Carol Service – possibly partly to occur outside.

9th December – Christmas Lunch in the school room.

16th December – John Harris providing lunchtime entertainment in aid of the Diabetic and Alzheimer Associations.

Christmas Eve Carol Service at 10.30.am.

At the Council meeting it was decided that our charities for the year would be Action for Children, Matjinge – Zimbabwe water project and Water Aid. It seems we have had several services recently about love, faith and neighbourliness, etc – all meaningful.

Greetings from Heacham to all our friends in the Circuit.

Joan Careless

Terrington St Clement

The Harvest coffee morning and service went well. Aspects of Faith continues to meet on the last Thursday of the month. Jackie shared her time at Conference which covered a lot of topics.

I went to Feltwell to the pastoral meeting.

We discussed ways to include the community in our chapel life which we felt important.

Sadly Wendy's Dad died and we had a service at Chapel to celebrate his life. Debbie Roberts of the Fenland Circuit preached at TSC in a pulpit swap with Jackie. She was very concerned about one of her dogs, which unfortunately died. Members of TSC and Clenchwarton had a sponsored walk and called in at the coffee morning for refreshments. We are hoping to create a Warm Space on a Saturday at coffee morning, all are welcome. Christmas coffee

morning is December 9th from 10am to 11.30am. Stalls, raffle and mince pies. Please come and choose your cards and presents for Christmas.

Linda Howling

Downham Market

We continue to meet for worship and the Social Centre is always buzzing with Messy Church, Prayer Shawl Ministry, Ladies' Friendship, Stroke Club, Dementia Club, Guides, Brownies, BB, U3A. Tufty Club, Carpet bowls, daily lunches to name the ones I can remember.

We have had to close our choir as we had so few singers but we spread ourselves around the congregation and make a joyful noise. Our acoustics are fantastic.

At the moment some of us are busy knitting Angels which will be spread around the town for people to find.

We have the local school, Nelson Academy, to celebrate Christingle on December 15th and Candlelit Carols on Friday December 22nd at 4pm.

If you fancy being part of a Record Breaking attempt for the largest living Nativity, come along to Hillcrest School at 1pm on December 3rd, dressed as ANY Nativity participant, (a crown, a t-towel, a shepherd's crook, a halo). Even if we don't manage it we will have started the real Christmas,

Me



FenSong has been working really hard on their version of "A Christmas Carol" to get you in the mood for the season. There are four venues;

1/ Nordelph Village Hall on the 9th December

2/ Cornerstone Baptist Church, King's Lynn, 11th December

3/ Stoke Ferry Village Hall, 13th December

4/ Downham Market Methodist Church, 15th December, a Friday.

All performances begin at 6.30pm (as we have some quite small children who need to be in bed because they have school the next day!)

As usual, as a travelling troupe, we shall be light on set and high on physical theatre, but there will be lovely costumes and of course, the last song will

always be in British sign language .As the ghosts struggle to make Scrooge see the error of his ways before it is too late, we are reminded of the real meaning of Christmas, and as the name suggests, there will be a goodly number of Christmas favourite carols on board as well, and we shall be delighted if the audience joins in.

FenSong is a completely free children's theatre company, which works with mainstream and special needs children..

Tickets are £8 for adults, £5 for children and concessions and a family ticket which allows for 2 adults and three children, will cost £20.00, available from [FenSong event tickets from TicketSource](#), or email directly at fensongtheatre@gmail.com, or ask for Cate on 07943 523437

We look forward to seeing you there!

Catriona Markwell

Hilgay and Southery

On September 8th our Harvest Festival was led by Rev. Chris Bishop. It was lovely to have Chris and Lesley back with us for this occasion which was a joint service with the congregation from All Saints Church.

Produce was placed on the Harvest Table and after the service people were invited to take what they liked in exchange for a donation to Water Aid.

A lunch was served after the service for about 40 people.

On November 5th Rev. Paul Critchley conducted a service of Holy Communion combined with an All Souls service where the congregation were invited to light a candle in memory of family and friends they had lost.

Our Guild continues to meet **on alternate Tuesdays at 2:30pm.**

Programme for December, January, February. includes

December 19th Christmas Guild,

January 30th. Wandering around Germany with Mr Bach and others,

February 13th Pancake Day.

As Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday this year our annual Carol Service will be at **3pm**. Led by Rev. Robert Roberts.

Pauline Driver.

Gaywood St Faith's

After six-and-a-half years as Team Vicar at St Faith's Church, the Rev Canon Karlene Kerr, is leaving the parish. However, she is literally going down the road to St John's Church in The Walks - in geographical terms the next closest church to St Faith's.

Canon Karlene, who is also Rural Dean of the Lynn Deanery, will say farewell to the congregations of St Faith's on December 10th. She will be licenced as Priest-in-Charge of St John's in January.

Canon Karlene says she is looking forward to the challenges of her new role and all of us at St Faith's wish her every blessing in her new ministry.

The move of Canon Karlene will mean it will be all change at St Faith's leaving only the Rector, the Rev Kyla Sorensen and Methodist Minister, the Rev Robert Roberts at the helm of the Anglican and Methodist Church.

More changes are expected next year with the hoped-for arrival of a new curate at St Faith's and the move of the Rev Roberts to a new post.

St Faith's has planned a series of Christmas services, including the ever-popular Carols by Candlelight at 6.30pm on December 17th. The ancient church takes on a magical appearance with the flickering candles around the church and the beautifully decorated Corona suspended over the Chancel. Favourite, traditional Carols and Lessons, telling the age-old Christmas story, and anthems sung by the choir, all combine in such a beautiful service.

On Christmas Eve there will be the usual Midnight Mass service of Holy Communion (please note the starting time of 11.15pm)

Other popular Christmas services include the Christingle service on 14th December at 4pm and the beautiful Crib service in church at 4pm on Christmas Eve.

On Christmas Day there is a family Holy Communion celebration at 10am.

On New Year's Eve there are services at 9.45am and 6.30pm. Full details of all Christmas services at St Faith's with dates and times are available by contacting the Church Office on 01553 279687.

The popular Christmas Fair is being held on 25th November in Gaywood Church Rooms and we are delighted that Borough Mayor and Gaywood councillor and resident, Margaret Wilkinson, is to officially open the event at 2pm.

There is always a friendly family atmosphere at the event and Gaywood Church Rooms will be transformed to become a festive-style market with the chance to pick-up a festive bargain at one of its many stalls. In the refreshment area visitors can enjoy a chat with friends over a cup of tea or coffee and a slice of home-made cake or a cheese or fruit scone. The Fair starts at 2pm and admission is free.

It is a remarkable record of faithful, dedicated service to God and His church in January 2024 when Olwyn Barber turns 89 she will have sung in the choir for 78 years - a proud record in anyone's book.

Olwyn, a lifelong Gaywood resident, first joined the choir at the age of 11. In her early days in the choir Olwyn attended services three times every Sunday. Her soprano voice has also been heard at countless weddings and funerals.

Her long service in the choir stalls was recognised when she was interviewed on the BBC TV'S Songs of Praise. She has also been a finalist in the lifetime achievement category of the Local Community Heroes Awards promoted by Your Local Paper. Olwyn was seen on a large screen in King's Lynn Corn Exchange talking about her life and times as a member of St Faith's Choir.

In October it was lovely to welcome back to Gaywood St Faiths former Team Vicar, the Rev Dale Gingrich . He served in that role for eight years before moving to become a vicar of a rural group of parishes near Banbury in Oxfordshire.

However, it was a sad occasion that brought him back to Gaywood. He conducted the funeral service at Mintlyn Crematorium for Irene Rumball, who was a faithful member of St Faith's Choir from 1972 until 2009. She died peacefully at the Tapping House Hospice at Hillington on 14th September aged 99. At her own request, Irene's funeral was led by the Rev Dale and it was a "no frills, no nonsense" service as she requested.

After the service, the Rev Dale joined Irene's close family and friends for tea and cake in the church.

The annual Remembrance Day service and parade from St Faith's Church to the Gaywood Clock War memorial went ahead on 12th November following the parade's cancellation last year because of issues over the closure of roads around the Clocktower.

This year's service was very well attended and was particularly notable for the number of young people taking part with an impressive turn-out by young members of Gaywood's uniformed organisations, including cubs and guides. The moving service in church, led by St Faith's Rector, the Rev Kyla Sorensen, paid tribute to all those people from Gaywood and the wider community, who served in the First and Second World Wars and in more recent conflicts around the globe and paid the ultimate price and never returned home. At the Clock Tower all those gathered around the memorial observed the national two minutes silence and watched as the first poppy wreath was laid by Gaywood councillor, Jo Rust who represented the Borough Mayor, Margaret Wilkinson.

May I take this opportunity of wishing Christmas greetings to all readers of Rejoice magazine and wish you all a happy and healthy New Year.

Richard Parr .

Hunstanton

The Harvest Festival weekend began with a Harvest Tea on Saturday, September 30th. Thirty friends from Snettisham, Heacham and the United

Reform church joined us for afternoon tea. Everyone brought food to share which created a wonderful buffet. Crossword puzzles were left on the tables to exercise the "little grey cells" as people were eating. In between visits to replenish plates there were quizzes, organised by Pat Sharman. David Godfrey provided musical entertainment throughout the afternoon. Richman and his family sang for us and we ended with David leading us in a sing song of harvest hymns to round off a very pleasant afternoon.

The following day we had a joyful Harvest Festival and were thankful for the generosity of all who contributed. Fresh vegetables and fruit were donated by Northfield allotments, these were given to a care home; the rest of the goods went to help the needy in the area.

During October, we hosted the Methodist Women in Britain day, when women came from all over East Anglia to meet and hear a guest speaker. We also had Guides staying for a sleepover during the half term week. Sadly, the weather was not good and so a rather bedraggled group arrived, but their luck was in because it was our Thursday Warm space. After joining us for biscuits and drinks they were ready to brave the weather for a trip to the RNLI station.

We are now preparing for Christmas and send our greetings to all for a Happy Christmas and our good wishes for 2024.

Jean Hornbuckle

Wimbotsham

Meg Cooper led a Harvest Service where all members took part. After the service a lunch of soup and crusty bread was enjoyed. Donations were sent to the Food Bank.

The next thing is Christmas. Our Christmas Coffee Morning will be on December 16th, with seasonal treats. Come and join us anytime between 10.15 and noon.

On Sunday December 17th we will have our service of Nine Lessons and Carols, again with everyone taking part.

May we wish everyone in the Circuit a peaceful and blessed Christmas and New Year 2024 has come round very fast!!

Mary Rose



Christmas is coming.....help!

I have always treasured the Advent journey – those precious opportunities to pause in the midst of all the frantic planning and ‘list-making’ and look forward to what – and *who* – really matters at Christmas and (although easier said than done) to put aside the hullabaloo of commercial pressures which assail us at this time of the year..... the all-too-early start of advertising (did I *really* see our local Garden Centre setting up their ‘Winter Wonderland’ in August?), the constant bombardment of ‘muzak’-style carols in every shop or café, the pressure to decide on the sort of presents which people might want or need (*anything coated in chocolate will do nicely thank you, just in case you were wondering.....*). I have to confess that, like other people, the start of Advent heralds certain feelings of panic – despite my resolutions that ‘I’ll be better organised than last year’, it can still feel like a race towards deadlines and last posting dates. But of course, the season is all about much more important ‘preparations’, and reminds us that there is something far greater than tinsel and glitter to look forward to. Don’t get me wrong; I enjoy all the fairy lights and mulled wine (*non-alcoholic, naturally*) but the real joy comes from knowing that we are preparing to hear again that wonderful message of hope – and the knowledge that there is a still greater hope, through the promise that Christ will come a second time to restore a lost and broken world. Did we ever need to hear that promise *more* than in our current times?

And so I pray that Advent is (or has been, depending on when you receive your copy of Rejoice!) a blessed time for you, and that when you open your presents this Christmas, among them you will find the love, joy and hope of the Christ Child.

Gordon joins me in wishing you a happy and peace-filled Christmas, and I leave you with a light-hearted poem which I found some years ago, which always reminds me where I need to focus my thoughts in my Advent preparations.
God bless.

Deacon Lynne

“MADvent?”

“Today, we are in Advent!” the preacher said this morning,
“Let us turn our thoughts to the Messiah’s birth.”
“Praise God”, we all replied;
while secretly I was thinking,
This is the beginning of ‘MADvent’;
I dread to think of the chaos of the next few weeks.

But at least today I’m here in worship;
At least, for this brief hour, I can look forward,
Beyond the frills and trimmings so ‘essential’ to our festivities,
To visualize that chilly, yet strangely warm, night in Bethlehem.

My mind sees first, the plastic figures in massed produced cribs,
The jingle of bells and adverts, and queues in the shops;
How brainwashed have I become by meaningless commercialism?
I know that Christmas is far more than that.
Lord, make it real again for me.

“Today, we are in Advent!”, the preacher repeated,
“Will this Christmas be special for you?”
“Praise God”, my heart replied,
And my other self has, at last, joined in to decide
To put Christ at the top of our daily Advent list,
Amidst the excitement and busyness to come.

(Anon)



Cover the bottom half of the page before you try these questions!!!

CHRISTMAS QUIZ

- 1 What did the first ever SMS text message, sent 3rd December 1992 read?
- 2 Which of Santa's reindeers is named after another animal?
- 3 How many points does a snowflake have?
- 4 Which Christmas song could make a child feel confused?
- 5 Which traditional foodstuff is illegal to eat on Christmas Day in England?
- 6 There are two Christmas Islands. Name the oceans in which they are located.
- 7 During Elizabethan times "humble pie" was popular at Christmas feasts. What was the main ingredient?
- 8 Who wrote the song "White Christmas" and in which year?
- 9 What were the names of the ghosts in "A Christmas Carol"?
- 10 How many days do we have between Christmas Day and Epiphany?

CHRISTMAS QUIZ ANSWERS (1) Merry Christmas (Engineer Neil Papworth typed "Merry Christmas" on a computer and sent the first SMS message to the cellphone of Vodafone director Richard Jarvis.) (2) Vixen (a fox) (3) Six (4) I saw mummy kissing Santa Claus (5) Mince Pies (Oliver Cromwell brought in the law in t)he 17th century , and no one has bothered to repeal it. (6) Pacific and Indian (7) Innards or offal (usually of deer) (8)Irving Berlin in 1940 (9) Christmas Past, Present and Yet to Come (10) 12 days

CIRCUIT SERVICE ON 22nd OCTOBER

Marion Kemp

The Circuit Service on Sunday 22nd October at Dersingham Methodist Church for Marion Kemp was well attended with several Circuit churches represented.

Rev. Rich led the service, Marion chose the hymns and readings and gave an inspiring testimony, and Rev. Steve Oliver gave the reflection. Rev. Rich presented Marion with a certificate of thanksgiving and appreciation and Hazel Burrell presented a bouquet of flowers from Dersingham.

Many commented on the singing and the uplifting atmosphere of the service.

Refreshments with cakes provided by Marion, were well received and enjoyed by the noise coming from the hall!

The retiring collection for Leaders of Worship and Preachers' Trust raised £124.56.

Elizabeth Batstone, Circuit LWP secretary.

Answers to Bethlehem Quiz

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| 1 Samuel | 6 He 'belonged to the house and line of David' |
| 2 Micah | 7 (a) 6 |
| 3 (c) House of Bread | 8 T.S.Eliot |
| 4 (b) 80 | 9 (c) Phillips Brooks |
| 5 Ruth | |
-



Some Good News Stories

Many people find this time of year with its falling temperatures and long hours of darkness difficult. In addition, what we hear on the news or read in the newspapers is often gloomy so I thought it would be a good idea to share some good news stories from around our circuit.

Work with children and young people

In November, I attended the Feltwell and Downham Market Church Councils. It was particularly good to hear that Feltwell's recently formed group for teenagers is thriving. Good use is being made of the new multi-game table bought with a grant from the Circuit youth fund. Paul Critchley and I had a quick game of air hockey after the church council. Needless to say Paul won! The table tennis group also brings new people onto the church premises. They have expressed an interest in forming a "grown-ups youth club" especially as there are plans to buy further equipment. The church hall is now known as the Community Hall and it has been decided to purchase a sign to go above the door to advertise its new name and its openness to the community. Downham Methodist Church is ready to advertise in the New Year for the post of families and children's worker to work in the Downham section and at RAF Marham. The church already has many youngsters and families coming into the church building through Guides, Brownies, Messy Church, two toddlers groups, the Fen Song Drama Group and Megga Messy so it is hoped to develop ways of making them feel part of the church family. On the morning of the Church Council, it was heartening to see mums pushing pushchairs out of the building as people gathered at the social centre for the popular Friday roast lunch. The November Messy Church was well attended. Two of our regular families weren't there but another two families who haven't been for a while returned. It was great to have two teenagers there too. December Messy Church will be a special one as Steph O'Shea-Barnes has offered to organise a light party. There will be a disco, luminous bowling and Scalextric as well as a Christmas crafts and cookery.

Matjinge Update

A survey has been carried out by Shamah Water Engineering and a detailed report with recommendations for achieving a reliable water supply for the primary school, secondary school and minister's house has been sent. **Many thanks go to Rosie Rayner for her persistence and hard work in setting this up.** The Climate Justice Group hopes to soon be in the position to commission the necessary work. In the meantime, if you would like to contribute to this cause, please contact Circuit Treasurer, Des Dent.

King's Lynn Night Shelter

So far £307, raised by three churches in the Circuit, has been sent to the Night Shelter. I am planning to have a stall at Hilgay Village Hall's

Christmas Fair in aid of the Night Shelter as Hilgay with Southery's Contribution to this Circuit initiative.

Have you got any good news stories that you would like to share?

Lesley Dent

Oh, Goodie a Local Arrangement

How do you feel when you look at the new plan and see an L.A. against your Church's name? Does it fill you with trepidation or with a great sense of anticipation? It can feel like a daunting prospect if you've ever been asked to contribute to an L.A. but have you ever noticed how they always seem to come together perfectly.

Does your Church use "The Vine" a great resource which the Circuit provides for every Church in the Circuit? This can prove very helpful if stuck for ideas. Being designated an L.A. isn't just the Circuit trying to fill gaps in the plan but to encourage us all to develop what it means for us to worship together as a group and indeed to deepen our own personal relationship with God. There isn't a right or a wrong way to do it, we are all learning together.

A couple of pointers to think about. It might help to choose hymns that people know well. Maybe some members of the congregation would like to be involved in choosing the hymns.

Remember too that our Super Rev. Robert Roberts has offered to come to any Church which would like any kind of help or guidance with doing L.As.

Don't forget to offer the service to God, pray about it during the week before the Service. Ask God to prepare the hearts of the congregation ready for Worship. Remember you are doing it for God; he will support you in it.

So if you're asked to play some part in your Churches L.A. Service, however small a part, go for it, God will be in it with you.

Maggie Blowers

Downham has had a Songs of Praise with members of the congregation choosing a hymn and telling us why

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| 1 Samuel | 6 He 'belonged to the house and line of David' |
| 2 Micah | 7 (a) 6 |
| 3 (c) House of Bread | 8 T.S.Eliot |
| 4 (b) 80 | 9 (c) Phillips Brooks |
| 5 Ruth | 10 (b) the Palestinians |

DID YOU KNOW?

In the Victorian era, birds raised in East Anglia were often herded along Drovers' roads to London to be sold fresh in time for Christmas. Daniel Defoe recorded that 150,000 turkeys were driven from East Anglia to London each year, a journey that took three months to complete. To protect their feet, turkeys were fitted with leather or sacking boots, while geese had theirs tarred and sanded.

For good luck, British tradition recommends that everyone should eat a mince pie on each of the twelve days of Christmas. Tradition states that anyone who refuses one of their twelve pies will suffer a year of misfortune (you have been warned!).

Christmas crackers are a British tradition dating back to Victorian times when in the early 1850s, London confectioner Tom Smith started adding a motto to his sugared almond bon-bons which he sold wrapped in a twisted paper package. As many of his bon-bons were bought by men to give to women, many of the mottos were simple love poems.

What's on from December 2023

Friday 1st/Sunday 3rd December Christmas Tree Festival at Pott Row

Sunday December 3rd. RECORD BREAKING ATTEMPT AT THE BIGGEST LIVING NATIVITY.

Friday 15th December FenSong presents "A Christmas Carol" at Downham Market 6.30pm

Sunday 24th December carol Service at Hilgay at 3pm

2024

Saturday 20th January Coffee morning with home-made cakes, bric-a-brac, books and jigsaw puzzles at Wimbotsham Methodist 10.15 am - 12 noon.

Saturday 17th February Coffee morning with home-made cakes, bric-a-brac, books and jigsaw puzzles at Wimbotsham Methodist 10.15 am - 12 noon.

Saturday 9th March Circuit Pastoral day Venue TBA.

Saturday 16th March Coffee morning with home-made cakes, bric-a-brac, books and jigsaw puzzles at Wimbotsham Methodist 10.15 am - 12 noon.

Not a very big magazine this time. Remember it's the Circuit, telling each other what is happening. We are smaller in the number of Churches we have so it is important that we stick together.

Merry Christmas to everyone and I look forward to hearing all your feel good stories in 2024.

Barbara

