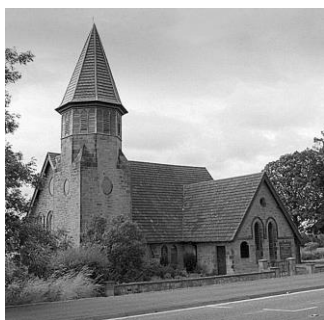


St George's, Widdrington & Great Bavington United Reformed Churches Newsletter



December 2022
& January 2023

Website: stgeorgesurcmorpeth.org

Worship & Events in December/January at St George's United Reformed Church

Thurs 1st	2.00pm	1 st Advent Course. Drysdale Room
Sat 3rd	7.00pm	Church Social. 50 Shades of Blue POSTPONED
Sun 4th	10.30am	Morning Worship with Celebration of Communion
Mon 5th	6.30pm	Life Remembers Service
Wed 7th	12.30pm	WOW Midweek Service
Thurs 8th	2.00pm	Advent Course. Drysdale Room
Sat 10th	10.00am	LCC Coffee Morning/ Sale of Christmas Decorations
Sun 11th	10.30am	Morning Worship
Mon 12th	6.30pm	Community Carol Service
Wed 14th	12.30pm	WOW Midweek Service
	7.30pm	Mid Northumbrian Chorus Rehearsal in Church
Thur 15th	2.00pm	Advent Course in Drysdale Room
Sat 17th	7.00pm	Mid Northumbrian Chorus Christmas Concert
Sun 18th	10.00am	Morning Worship – Nativity Service Joint with MMC at MMC.
	6.30pm	Joint Carol Service with MMC at St George's
Wed 21st	12.30pm	WOW Midweek Service
Thur 22nd	2.00pm	Advent Course in the Drysdale Room
Sat 24th	11.30pm	Watchnight Service
Sun 25th	10.00am	Morning Worship for Christmas Day
Wed 28th	12.30pm	WOW Midweek Service
Sun 1st Jan -		
<u>Please note that there will be no service on this Sunday</u>		

Steward's Duty & Flower Rotas are on page 13



The next joint newsletter with
Widdrington & Bavington URC's

covers events in February 2023

The deadline is Sunday 22nd January

Please do not wait for the deadline if you already have articles ready to be included. Please contact Stephanie. E-mail: robson-robson@hotmail.co.uk

What's On at St George's

SUNDAY FAMILY WORSHIP & JUNIOR CHURCH

10.30 am

MON	Age UK Exercise 9.00-12.00 noon Ronka Gbadebo	07952381160
	Age UK Exercise: 3.00 – 4.00pm As above	
TUES	Morning Badminton 10.00am – 12 noon Allen Oakes allen@oakesa.co.uk	
	Rainbows, 5.00pm Liz Kelly 783434 Mobile 07714481089 liz.kelly@jcpce.com	
	Brownies: 6.00pm Susan Fairgrieve . s.fairgrieve21@gmail	
	Guides and Rangers: from 7.00pm Liz Kelly 783434 Mobile 07714481089 liz.kelly@jcpce.com	
	Ladies Coffee Club: 2.00pm (3 rd Tues) nb: new start time Contact: Sarah Cleverley	515257
	Cobweb Orchestra 7.30 – 9.30pm In the Sanctuary Contact: Christine Oakes 518608 or Penny Oxley 514612	
WED	Morning Badminton: 9.30am Sarah Cleverley	515257
	Knitter, Natter Crafts & Chatter 2.00 – 4.00pm Joan Cooper	515682
	Afternoon Bowls 2.00pm Andrew Cleverley	515257
	Zumba: 6.00pm High Intensity with Lisa O on 07507 179 692 or zumbawithlisao@hotmail.com	
THURS	Morning Badminton: 10.00-12.00 Allen Oakes allen@oakesa.co.uk	
	Zumba: 5.45pm. Low Intensity with Lisa O on 07507 179 692 or email zumbawithlisao@hotmail.com	
SAT	Table Tennis: 10.00 – 12.00 Christine Richardson Country Dance Club: (Varies from month to month) Contact: Shirley Forster	513913
SUN	Orchestra: Norm. 4 th Sunday Andrew Hamnett 518485 (not August) Christine Oakes 518608	

A Message from our Minister, Revd Julian Sanders

Dear friends, Merry Xmas.

I know what you are already thinking – “Xmas!” whatever happened to “Christmas!” – Its just another example of how society today is forgetting the real reason for this seasonal celebration. I have heard people worrying that there are no religious Christmas cards being sold, that there are no nativity scenes adorning our seasonal postage stamps, and that our decorated shop windows recognise our worship of Consumerism rather than the Christ child (apart from Rutherford’s of course, who continue to carry on the tradition). I wonder why we are so worried about these things.....and what is so wrong with wishing people a Happy Xmas.

You may have seen that the Lindisfarne Gospels have been on display at the Laing Art Gallery in Newcastle and that a replica of the Lindisfarne Gospels was on display in Morpeth library also during this time. I went to have a look at the Morpeth library display and was impressed by the amount of detail and artistry that has been put into just a few words of the gospels.

Unfortunately I was not able to see the Chi Rho page that adorns the beginning of Matthew's gospel. As the first of the gospels, the beginning of Matthew's gospel is suitably ornate as to be a gateway into the gospels. It is a page richly decorated so that the reader can meditate and contemplate on the images as they enter into reading the gospel.

It is called the Chi Rho page because the focus of the design for the page is the two Greek letters Chi and Rho, being the "Ch" and "r" of Christ. The "Ch" is shaped like an "X" and the "Rho" as a nearly recognisable "R" and in and around these two letters an intricately woven design of birds, animals, and knotwork patterns that have become familiar with Celtic Christianity.

It is this same "x" that is used to represent the whole word "Christ" in modern abbreviations. So when you see or write "Xmas" you are in fact drawing on a very ancient concept which is celebrated in the Lindisfarne Gospels. Rather than leaving "Christ" out of Christmas, actually you are writing exactly the same thing – and perhaps even a little more traditionally?

With every blessing for the Christmas season,

Julian

December Notes by the Way by Stuart Brock

Our eldest son, Jon and family, live in Sydney, Australia. We have been across the globe a few times to visit them, usually just as the Continent is coming into Spring. This, in the Southern Hemisphere means the months of September to November – which feels kind of strange to us, for obvious reasons. We have experienced some of the warmth for which the Continent is famous and been present when bush fire warnings have been at ‘high’ or even ‘critical’ risk. Fortunately these warnings have not developed into actual fires while we have been staying there, but they are a reminder of just how hot and dry the country can be.

On one visit in October with the temperatures hovering around the 30C mark we were surprised to see the shops already decorated for Christmas. There were displays of tinsel, boxes of baubles and artificial Christmas trees covered in artificial snow. Christmas lights twinkled in the shop windows. As the month wore on, adverts appeared persuading parents to pay for their kids to see Santa Claus. On a visit to a department store in central Sydney, Mr Claus himself came out of his grotto. He was wearing his traditional bright red suit, his head covered with a red hood. He had a long, fluffy white beard and long black boots. The temperature outside that day had already hit 26C and it was still only 11am! Clearly Mr S. Claus is as busy in the Southern Hemisphere as he is in the Northern, the weather notwithstanding. We have never stayed Down Under as late as December, the real Australian Summer but we understand that Christmas Day is celebrated in many parts of the country with as much enthusiasm as in the UK. Australians flock in their thousands to the beach to relax and chill with a big ‘Barbie, and all this when, by December 25th, temperatures may have reached. 40C.

One’s experience of the Festive Season would seem, at first sight, very different, depending on which part of the world one lives in. Another branch of the family lives in Canada. My cousin is a retired sheep farmer in Alberta. He regularly reports that temperatures can fall as low as minus 30C at this time of the year and there is thick snow on the ground for much of the Winter and into the Spring – ideal conditions for skis (and of course for reindeer and sleighs!)

Two contrasting experiences of this time of year. But whether we remember the story of the first Christmas from the point of view of the heat of Bondi Beach or the cold of the Canadian plain, (or the dreary damp of a British Winter come to that) the core message is the same.

It tells of a love that has no boundaries of climate or geography, history or time and space. It speaks of a Child who will one day be ruler of all nations. He will show that love by giving his life away to bring salvation to the world.

We don’t need a heavy fall of snow to provide a romantic background to the Christmas story. We don’t need to dream of a white Christmas or, alternatively of endless sunshine and blue skies. All we need is a little faith to believe that God has come among us in the humility of a newborn Child to show us the way to live, so that we, wherever we are, can also follow that way. This story is as relevant in a needy world as it has ever been.

We are hoping the family Down Under will be able to visit us next year during our Summer. We must remind them to bring a jumper or two. They might still feel a little chilly in any potential Northumbrian heatwave!

Dear friends at St George's,
Richard, Elaine and I have been overwhelmed by the number of letters, phone calls, flowers and cards sent to us since the passing of our much loved Pete last month. Thank you all for surrounding us with your support and love - such a great comfort to us at this sad time. Thank you, too, to Julian for all his gentle help and guidance.
With love **Vivien**

UKRAINIAN FAMILIES IN MORPETH & DISTRICT



We continue to hold Coffee Mornings in our Church for the Ukrainian families who are newly arrived in the area, and their hosts, providing an opportunity to support and welcome them into our community. These are being held every Friday from 10.00 am until 12 noon until further notice. This is providing a very successful hub for families to together supported by our community. Please come along and support this initiative.

Refugees December 2022

Both West End Refugee Service and Justice and Peace Refugee Service reflect on the effect the national situation is having on their work and the service users they seek to support. J&P sum it up by saying *“We continue to reflect on what is happening in the world around us, nationally and internationally. All of the current issues are starting to affect everyone here at home. We understand all of these issues as it affects us all. We are keen to ensure that those who are worst-off in our society and those we help through the project, those seeking asylum in the UK and new refugees, that they are not forgotten in this period.”*

West End Refugee Service

WERS has announced the details of its AGM. It will be held on **Tuesday 6th December 2022 at 1pm at Summerhill Bowling Club, Winchester Terrace, Newcastle, NE4 6EH**. If you wish to attend, please let them know in advance. The report can be found at

<https://www.wers.org.uk/agm-20202021>. (This is the same page as the annual accounts and the minutes of last year's AGM.) It is an interesting read and details the achievements and the challenges of the past financial year, which was clearly impacted by the ongoing Covid pandemic. In this report they say *“throughout the year we have provided support and opportunities to over 600 people seeking asylum and refugees. We formally registered 510 people who engaged with a range of WERS services. Others who were supported were helped with ad hoc support – food, toiletries, donations of clothes which did not require them to register with us. This number does not include dependants of beneficiaries. We supported people seeking sanctuary from 60 countries. 16% were from Iraq, 14% from Iran, other top nationalities supported include people from Eritrea, Syrian, Sudan. The people we supported were aged from 18 to 78 years. We saw 209 people who were familiar with our services and 301 people who were new to WERS - a significant increase of 119.7% in new registrations.*

Throughout the year, we have also supported a more transient population of those housed in initial accommodation in disused hotels. Whilst many are there for months/years, there has also been frequent movement in and out of the region in this period.

We have continued to support people who are currently seeking asylum, those who

have received refugee protection/status and people who are destitute and have no recourse to public funds due to a negative decision on their asylum claim.”

WERS are also working with many other organisations to LIFT the BAN and let people seeking asylum work in the community.

They are specifically appealing for shampoo, conditioner, shower gel, toothpaste, tooth brushes, deodorant, shaving gel, hand and bar soap, sanitary towels and nappies (especially larger sized ones). As part of their festive appeal they are also asking for new warm gloves and hats (mainly for men) and chocolate treats.

Justice and Peace Refugee Project

The need for support continues. In the last month they have welcomed a further 33 new clients in need of food to supplement their meagre allowance. The need for toothbrushes, toothpaste, shower gels, deodorants, shampoo, conditioners and washing powders as well as cooking oil, coffee and rice is as strong as ever. They stress that they are grateful for all the help; spiritual, physical and financial. The work of both these organisations continues throughout the year so please remember the staff, volunteers and service users this Christmas.

The Justice and Peace website quotes the words of Pope Francis,

“We cannot remain insensitive, our hearts deadened, before the misery of so many innocent people. We must not fail to weep. We must not fail to respond.”

Thank you for your support.

Margaret Brock

Christian Aid ceilidh On Saturday 19th November the church hall was filled with music and dancing. The annual Christian Aid ceilidh was back after the covid break and the hall was packed with people from all the different churches in Morpeth and their friends. The SGURC band played continuously and there was a roomful of people, including 9 children, who needed little encouragement to get up and dance. There was lots of chatter and laughter as well as the opportunity for people to catch up with friends. Thanks to everyone who helped or attended. The sum of £411 was raised for Christian Aid.

Margaret Brock

**St. George's United Reformed Church
Morpeth**



**Saturday 17th December
at 7.00 pm**



"Night of Miracles"



**A seasonal celebration
presented by**



The Mid-Northumberland Chorus

Conducted by Paul Toward.

Accompanist – Emma Straughan

Tickets £7.00 - from Gillian 01670 515870

Or from Members of the Choir

Children Free.

Tea, Coffee & Biscuits at interval.



**St George's United Reformed
Church**
Bridge Street, Morpeth

Coffee Morning

**& Sale of Christmas
Crafts and
Floral Decorations**

Christmas Cake Raffle ~ Hamper Raffle
& Home made cakes, Jams and Preserves

Saturday 10th December
10am – Noon in the Hall

Coffee or tea and mince pies
Lift Access
Proceeds in aid of Church funds

We are going to exhibit them at our Christmas coffee morning on December 10th. So please come and see them. **Joan Cooper 01670515682**

St George's Ladies Coffee Club and Flower Committee Coffee Morning Saturday 10th December 10 to 12 noon.

At the coffee morning we plan to have a cake, jams and preserves stall and a stall selling new or nearly new Christmas decorations.
Donations of cakes, jams and preserves would be gratefully appreciated and also new or nearly new Christmas decorations but no bric-a-brac.
If you can help with donations please contact Sarah Cleverley (515257) or Linda Glascott (515582) or they can be brought to the church hall on Friday 9th December between 2 and 4pm. Our January meeting on Tuesday 17th at 2.00pm will take the form of the Annual General Meeting.

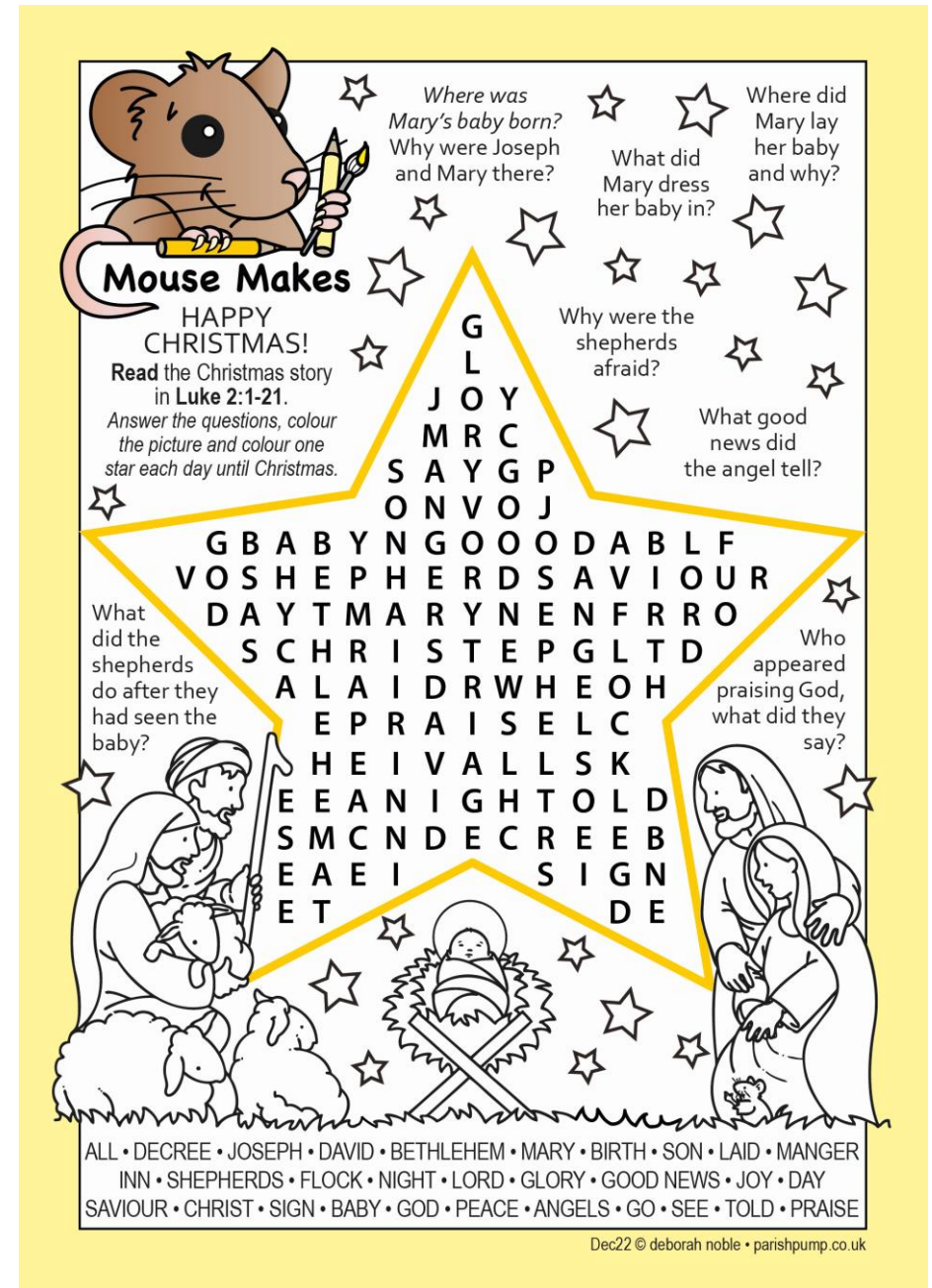
St. George's Knitter Natter Group

I would like to let everyone know that our group will meet between 1pm- 3pm on Wednesdays (1hour earlier) so that we can get home in daylight during the winter months. Our last meeting for 2022 will be on December 14 and our first for 2023 on January 4th. Coffee will be available for anyone who would like to call in for a chat.

We have had a lovely surprise gift from the Ukraine. As you will all know our knitting needles have been very busy making Balaclavas, hats and other items to go on the Freda van with Simon for use in Ukraine. Simon has just returned.

A group of ladies in the village of

Kadyshche, Ukraine have a similar group to ours but they are repairing traditional antique embroideries to preserve them, they have sent us the most beautiful collection as a thankyou for our knitting.





We have a list of folks we know, all written in a book
 and every year at Christmas time we go and take a look.
 Find that is when we realise these names are just a part,
 not of the book they're written in, a big part of our heart.
 For each name stands for someone who has crossed our path
 sometime, and in that meeting they've become the feeling in this
 rhyme.
 Find whilst it sounds fantastic for us to make this claim
 we really feel we are composed of each remembered name.
 Find while you may not be aware of any special link
 just meeting you has shaped our life more than you can think.
 For once you've met somebody, the years cannot erase
 the memory of a pleasant word, or a friendly face.
 So never think our Christmas card is just a mere routine
 of names upon a Christmas card, forgotten in between,
 for when we send you a Christmas Card, that is addressed to you
 it's because you're on the list of folks that we're indebted to.
 For you're part of the total of the many folks we've met
 and you happen to be one of those we prefer not to forget.
 Find how ever long we've known you, for many
 years or few
 in some way you have had a part in



shaping things we do.
 So every year when Christmas comes, we realise anew
 The biggest gift that life can give....
 Is having friends like you.

Submitted by Patricia Gatherum



Due to ill health, I have had to cancel the social in December, Christine Oakes will be in charge of reimbursing ticket sales. Hopefully we'll be able to run it in the New Year.

Joann

It is Angel time again, how time flies these days.
 I will put patterns in the Church vestibule and a container to
 hold our Angel Host, at the beginning of November just in
 case you have lost yours.
 Please let me know if you can think of anywhere special for the



Angels to fly this year. In the past we have given them to care home residents, food bank customers as well as placing them in and around Morpeth. I do know some have flown to countries far away as well. They will fly, as usual, on the week beginning December 19th.

Thank you in advance for your help. These small Angels spread a lot of love where ever they go. Thank you.

Patricia Gatherum

Seasonal smiles... Children's version of the Christmas story

- When the three wise guys from the east side arrived, they found Jesus in the manger.
- When Mary heard that she was the mother of Jesus, she sang the Magna Carta.
- Jesus was born because Mary had an immaculate contraption.

Tea Time Talk

Thursday 12th January at 2.00pm

'Why Victoria'

Given by Christine Hawkins
With cream scones, tea and coffee.
Suggested donation £3

Stewards Duties for December/January 2023

Sunday 4 th December	Gordon Slack and Gillian Irvine
Sunday 11 th December	Christine Hawkins and Katherine Smailes
Sunday 18 th December	Andy and Sarah Cleverley (Carol Service 6.30pm)
Sunday 25 th December	Madeline and Sarah Cleverley
Sunday 1 st January	No Service at St George's
Sunday 8 th January	Gillian Irvine and Karen Howe
Sunday 15 th January	Joan Cooper and Christine Oakes
Sunday 22 nd January	Madeline and Sarah Cleverley
Sunday 29 th January	Gordon Slack and Christine Hawkins



Flower Rota for December

4	Dorothy Luke
11	Church Decorations
18	For
25	Christmas

The Holy Family.....A Sunday school teacher asked her class, "What was Jesus' mother's name?"

One child answered, "Mary."

The teacher then asked, "Who knows what Jesus' father's name was?"

Another child ventured: "Verge?"

Confused, the teacher asked, "Where did you get that?"

He replied hesitantly: "Well, you know they are always talking about Verge n' Mary."

P.R.E.S.S

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Solution on page 20

Lord's Prayer, updated....I had been teaching my three-year-old daughter, Caitlin, the Lord's Prayer. For several

evenings at bedtime, she would repeat after me the lines from the prayer. Finally, she decided to go solo. I listened with pride as she carefully enunciated each word right up to the end of the prayer. Then she implored: "and lead us not into temptation but deliver us some e-mail."

Christmas card...Richard, my husband, and I had a hectic Christmas holiday schedule involving work, care of parents, driving of teenagers, shopping, and all the required doings of the season. Running out of time, I asked a local printer to simply print our name on our Christmas cards, to save me signing each one. Soon we started getting cards from friends signed 'The Modest Morrisons', 'The Clever Clarks', and 'The Successful Smiths'. This baffled me until I looked again at our card. I had posted out a hundred cards neatly imprinted with 'Happy Holidays from the Rich Armstrong's'

Church officials...Six-year-old Angie and her four-year-old brother Joel were sitting together in church. Joel giggled, sang, and talked out loud. Finally, his big sister had had enough. "You're not supposed to talk out loud in church." "Why? Who's going to stop me?" Joel demanded. Angie pointed to the back of the church and said, "See those two big men standing by the door and glaring at you? They're hushers."

A Date for your diaries:

A preliminary notice for the World Day of Prayer. A Churches Together service. The annual World Day of Prayer being held at St. George's this year and is written by the woman of Taiwan. It will take place on Friday 3rd March at 1.30pm and last 1 hour approximately. This new earlier time is to allow parents, grandparents and carers to have time to take part before collecting children from school. Musicians and singers are invited with rehearsals on Friday 17th and Friday 24th February, at 11.00am and a full rehearsal at 10.00am on March 3rd. If you are interested in joining the choir etc., which will be led by Harriet Gilfillan, please contact Christine Oakes or Morag Stead for more information.

Gift Aid Tax Rebate

I have just received confirmation that the church will receive £10,275.21 tax rebate for the year ended 5th April 2022

A big thank you to everyone who has signed a declaration form. I know not everyone is able to sign up for various reasons and HMRC have a scheme for

charities to claim some rebate on cash donations and we are to receive a further £1,156.25 under this scheme.

This means the church will receive a total of £11,431.46. If you would like further information please contact me.

May I take this opportunity to remind everyone who has signed up for Gift Aid to please let me know if there is any change in your circumstances, house move etc.

Linda Glascott
Tel: 01670 515582



Wordsearch for December

Christmas is nearly here! Two thousand years ago the Jews were longing for the coming of their Messiah. The Old Testament had promised that when He came, He would preach good news to the poor, bind up the broken hearted, proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, comfort all who mourn and to bestow on his people a crown of beauty instead of ashes. Jesus did all those things. He was and is the Son of God, and whoever has seen Him has seen the Father. Whoever believes in Him will have the best gift of all – His Spirit within them, which gives them eternal life.

Messiah Broken Heart Freedom
Darkness Favour Prisoners
Comfort Mourn Bestow Crown

Beauty Ashes Son God Jesus
Seen Father Whoever longing
thousand

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

Solution on page 20

Christmas entertaining... Inviting a number of people to come and stay with you over the Christmas holidays is a lot like living in California: if you find a fault, don't dwell on it!

US elections...Edward Hale, while chaplain of the U.S. Senate, was once asked if he prayed for the senators. He quickly replied, "No. After getting to know the senators, I pray for the people."

What do you call Santa's helpers? – Subordinate Clauses.
What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire? – Frostbite.

A little boy rushed home from school and said excitedly: "I got a part in the Christmas play!" "What part?" asked his mother. "I'm one of the three wise guys!"

Bargain with God...A man was driving down the street worried because he had an important meeting and couldn't find a parking place.



"Does anyone have a light, please?"



"The vicar's still miffed that one of the parents got £250 from You've Been Framed for their video of last year's nativity play."

Looking up toward heaven, he prayed in desperation: "Lord, take pity on me. If you find me a parking place, I will go to

church every Sunday for the rest of my life and give up whisky."Miraculously, a moment later a parking place appeared. He looked up again and said, "Never mind. I found one."

Good home... After the christening of his baby brother in church, young Jason sobbed all the way home in the back seat of the car. His father asked him three times what was wrong. Finally, the boy replied, "That minister said he wanted us to be brought up in a good Christian home, but I want to stay with you guys."

Presents...December is the month when the children begin to discuss what to get Dad for Christmas. Some insist on getting him a shirt, others a pair of socks. But the argument always ends in a tie.

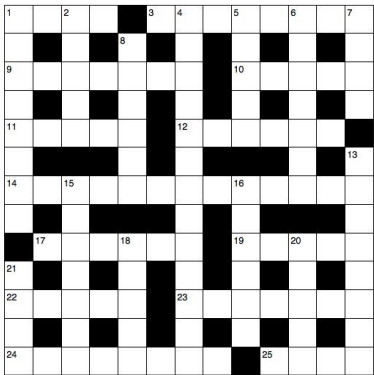
Any astronomer can predict with absolute accuracy just where every star in the universe will be when the clocks chimes midnight on Christmas Eve. He can make no such prediction about his teenage daughter. – Anon.

Monday December 12th at 6.30pm

There will be the Annual Community Carol Service with Alison Byard, Mayor of Morpeth in attendance. You are invited to begin the Christmas Season singing many of your favourite carols. Everyone is welcome.

Crossword for December

Across: 1 'How long will you — your face from me?' (Psalm 13:1) (4) 3 'Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the he bore'(Hebrews 13:13) (8) 9 Posh sin (anag.) (Romans 8:15) (7) 10 Solemn pledges (Matthew 5:33) (5) 11 Italian term for full orchestra (5) 12 'For he who avenges blood remembers; he does not — the cry of the afflicted' (Psalm 9:12) (6) 14 Prescience (1 Peter 1:2) (13) 17 Where Hindu holy man lives (6) 19 'If he found any... who belonged to the Way, whether — — women, he might take them as prisoners' (Acts 9:3) (3,2) 22 Fragrance (2 Corinthians 2:15) (5)



23 Vine hen (anag.) (Jonah 1:2) (7) **24** Precious stone decorating the twelfth foundation of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:20) (8) **25** 'Will you keep to the old path that evil men have — ?' (Job 22:15) (4)

Down: **1** 'Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with — — ' (Numbers 20:11) (3,5) **2** 'You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, " — — murder"' (Matthew 5:21) (2,3) **4** One of Paul's many hardships endured as a servant of God (2 Corinthians 6:5) (13) **5** 'We ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, — inwardly' (Romans 8:23) (5) **6** Changed (Daniel 6:8) (7) **7** 'My yoke is — and my burden is light' (Matthew 11:30) (4)

8 Recoil (Revelation 12:11) (6) **13** 'O Lord, you have — me and you know me' (Psalm 139:1) (8) **15** ' — to me the joy of your salvation' (Psalm 51:12) (7) **16** Express sorrow (Isaiah 16:7) (6) **18** 'Then he said to Thomas, " — out your hand and put it into my side"' (John 20:27) (5) **20** 'God has said, " — will I leave you; — will I forsake you"' (Hebrews 13:5) (5) **21** Son of Onam and brother of Shammai (1 Chronicles 2:28) (4).

Solution on page 20

Here is the news from Great Bavington United Reformed Church for December and January:

Building repairs completed

Heritage Consolidation have completed the repairs to the church. This involved improving the ventilation in the roof space to reduce dampness and to keep the fabric of the church in good condition. The loft insulation has been replaced with sheep wool insulation which will keep the building warmer and is more environmentally friendly. The work was funded by grants from the Ray Wind Farm Community Fund, URC Northern Synod, the Northumbria Historic Churches Trust and the Congregational & General Charitable Trust, for which the church congregation is very grateful.

Now that the repairs are completed, the church is open again during the daytime for visitors.

DECEMBER

Services in December:

Sunday 4 December, **2.30pm**

Sunday 20 December, Carol Service, **2.30pm**

Christmas Eve: mince pies etc at **6.00pm** followed by carols at **6.30pm**

Film Night

In December, Film Night will be on **19 December** (the third Monday of the month, not the second) at 7.00pm. Film title to be announced - see www.facebook.com/GreatBavingtonURC. Refreshments provided. Donations towards Film Night costs are welcome.

JANUARY

Services

The first Sunday in the month is New Year's Day, so there will be no service then.

On Sunday 15 January, the service will be at **2.30pm**

Film Night

9 January (the second Monday in the month) at 7.00pm. Film title t.b.a.

Please check for updates on services and events on the church's Facebook page, email bavingtonchurch@gmail.com or ring 018030 540350. Rev Julian Sanders can be reached at sanders.julian@talk21.com or 01670 225539.

Nicola Bell

SOLUTIONS:

Crossword: ACROSS: 1, Hide. 3, Disgrace. 9, Sonship. 10, Oaths. 11, Tutti. 12, Ignore. 14, Foreknowledge. 17, Ashram. 19, Men or. 22, Aroma. 23, Nineveh. 24, Amethyst. 25, Trod. **DOWN:** 1, His staff. 2, Do not. 4, Imprisonments. 5, Groan. 6, Altered. 7, Easy. 8, Shrink. 13, Searched. 15, Restore. 16, Lament. 18, Reach. 20, Never. 21, Jada.

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

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

Post those cards on time! Final posting dates for the UK this Christmas are as follows:

- Friday 16th December: Royal Mail Bulk Mail Economy
- Monday 19th December: 2nd Class
- Wednesday 21st December: 1st Class
- Thursday 22nd December: Special Delivery Guaranteed & Royal Mail Tracked 24
- Friday 23rd December: Special Delivery Guaranteed with Saturday Guarantee

Visiting Father Christmas...A mother took her young daughter to visit Father Christmas in his grotto at the garden centre. He greeted the youngster merrily and asked: "And what would you like for Christmas?" The little girl stared at him, open-mouthed with horror. *"Didn't you get my email?!"*

WIDDRINGTON UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

PRAYING TOGETHER

If you would like to add any topics to next month's prayers, please let me know.

During January and February please pray for:

Ukraine and other war zones; for peace in the Korean Peninsula (where the Korean War has never officially ended)

Refugees

The people of Afghanistan, especially women.

Those suffering religious or ethnic persecution

Holocaust Memorial Day is in January: pray for victims of genocide

Victims of natural disasters,

Victims of crime

The work of relief agencies

Those suffering still from Covid19 throughout the world.

Health workers and workers in essential industries and services

Medical researchers, especially those working on COVID 19 vaccines

Vaccine delivery in third world countries.

The sick, both with physical and mental problems and the recently bereaved

Those in financial difficulties, and fuel poverty

The homeless

"Prayer, the Churches banquet, Angels age,

God's breath in man, returning to his birth,

The soul in paradise, heart in pilgrimage,

The Christian plummet, sounding heav'n and earth" (George Herbert)

Seven days without prayer makes one weak

WIDDRINGTON CHURCH NEWS

I'd like to invite everybody to contribute information that they think might be of interest. Just give me the details in writing either on a piece of paper or by email to elliemist@gmail.com and I'll do the rest. (I'd still welcome articles though).

The Copy Date for each magazine is the second last Sunday of the month before the next issue. If you miss the deadline your contribution may have to be held over to the next issue.

Flowers: Flowers for December by Fiona and January and February by Kathleen. Christmas flowers (and hopefully the tree) on Saturday 17th December, from 10.00am. If you'd like to help you'll be welcome. Anybody who has berried holly (or other trees/shrubs with berries) ivy etc: these will be much appreciated.

Easy Fund Raising (Easy?) Do you shop online? Have you joined Easy Fund Raising yet? The chances are that your vendor will be part of Easy Fund Raising. Amazon and John Lewis are, for instance. This means that if you register for Easy Fund Raising at easyfundraising.org.uk and select Widdrington United Reformed Church as your Good Cause 1 or 2 % of the purchase price of your item will come to us at no extra cost to yourself. This can range from a penny for a Kindle 99p short to several pounds for a major purchase. Please talk to Fiona about it soon (though you can easily register with no help from me, as all our members have discovered). We have raised over £400 so far with just nine members. We get a payout each quarter provided at least £15.00 has been raised. Every little helps!

Fund raising: Fundraising from our November ventures will be reported in the February magazine.

Worship: We feel we are 'back to normal'! Please feel free to wear a mask - or not - as you wish. Hand sanitisers continue to be available. You are invited to join us for coffee/tea after the service.

Preachers for December and January along with duty rotas are in the table below.

Social

Our Christmas Church meal is on Wednesday 7th December at Warkworth House,

6.30 for 7.00. You should have placed your order by now.

December 3rd and 4th (Saturday and Sunday) Festival of Cribs: the children of Grange View School are producing a nativity scene for each year group, which will be displayed in church over this weekend. We invite anyone who has a Nativity crib to bring it along to swell the numbers. Also if you have a largish artificial Christmas tree which you would be willing to lend for the weekend.(We feel it is too early to get the church tree.) The church will be open for viewing on Saturday and Sunday (after church) with refreshments available. Please come and see! If you could offer some time for stewarding, please speak to an elder.

January 6th: 12th Night Tea: a party to celebrate Epiphany: Christmas doesn't end on 26th December! This will be at Cook's Hemmel, and in line with our new policy will be afternoon tea. Details of start time, catering etc will be confirmed in Church notices and on Facebook.

Also to be confirmed in January, our planning meeting.

Regular events:

1st Tuesday: Coffee Club meets on the 1st Tuesday of the month at various coffee shops in the area. December's venue is the Hogs Head at Alnwick

1st Wednesday: Prayer Group: We gather at Cook's Hemmel, Causey Park at 7.00pm. You are welcome to join us, or tell us any of your concerns for prayer.

Facebook: If you are on Facebook, have you checked out our Facebook page yet? Search for Widdrington United Reformed Church. Please like us and let me know if you think I've missed anything that should be on. The page now has 186 likes, with another 8 people 'following'! Any information we have about service arrangements and social events will be published there.

Please note: Sean, our sheep, has his own Facebook page! Search for 'Sean'. Sean now has 24 (+2 following!) page 'likes' but he wants some more, so please tell your friends about him!

The website is at: www.widdringtonurc.org.uk

I'd appreciate some help to improve it, as it's very wordy at the moment, partly because I'm happiest with words. I'm still looking for volunteers to be additional site editors. Someone with hardware that can post pictures would be good.

Churches Together in Widdrington and Ulgham.

The Advent Course runs on Fridays throughout December in the Church Hall from 2.00pm. It is based on the film It's a wonderful life and will be led by Julian. Come and join us: it should be interesting and thought provoking.

We have a meeting in early January, after which we will be able to let you know about the proposed programme for the year.

We are hosting the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Service, which will be led by the worship group.

FEM

We are still collecting things!

*Medicine blister packs for Cancer Research

*Green plastic milk bottle tops to make wheelchairs

*Basic toiletries for the Ukraine appeal

*And don't forget the hamper for the food bank!

*Crisp packets no longer required for the moment.

Widdrington URC provides rest to the weary

In September Widdrington URC celebrated its 257th church anniversary and combined this with a service to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the United Reformed Church. The service was attended by 18 friends and members and was concluded with the dedication of a special commemoration bench that was purchased for the jubilee. The bench painted in URC colours was designed by a church member and manufactured by Northgate Hospital in their rehabilitation unit. Installed in the church grounds alongside the busy A1068 and adjacent to the bus stop, it is hoped this bench will be a place of rest for many weary traveller in the years to come.





Widdrington Rotas December and January

Date	Preacher	Vestry	Door/Offering
4th	Clive Kemp	Diana Hogg	K Bailey. E Barber
11th	Annetta Read	Kathleen Bailey	D Hogg. M Scott
18th	Revd Julian Sanders	Diana Hogg	R Gordon. A Grieves
25th	Worship Team	Fiona Middlemist	K. Bailey. E. Barber
Jan 1st	Worship Team: Carol Service	Kathleen Bailey	D. Hogg. M. Scott
8th	David Rogers	Diana Hogg	R Gordon F Middlemist
15th	Revd Julian Sanders: Communion	Liv Walden	K Bailey. E Barber
22nd	Worship Team: Week of Prayer United Service	Fiona Middlemist	L Walden A Grieves
29th	Sue Rutherford	Kathleen Bailey	D Hogg M Scott



Morpeth for Ukraine

Since May 2022 St. George's Church in Morpeth has been opening its doors on a Friday morning as a hub for Ukrainian refugees who have arrived in the area, together with their host families and plenty of volunteers under the banner of "Morpeth for Ukraine". These coffee mornings have also led to other activities being offered such as English language lessons and shared social gatherings with food and music.

Among those calling in back in July to offer help and introduce us to his own project was Simon Burnage, in the process of collecting humanitarian aid that he would drive across the Polish border and into Ukraine - his second such trip driving over 2,500km in 30 hours.



Simon handing over "Freda" to officials in Rivne

Freda is the name of the ex-supermarket delivery van donated to Simon to refurbish and transport a full load of aid to the besieged communities of Rivne, Lutsk and Kadyshche in Ukraine, and then for the van to be handed over to the local defence forces. The van was named in memory of the anonymous donator's mother. Together with Simon in the photograph are the Mayor of Rivne and a senior defence force officer.



Simon and woman in embroidered pinafores:



The woman's son was wounded in combat, is now recovering and awaiting redeployment to the front. The beanie hats and balaclavas knitted by St. George's "Knit and Natter" group were much appreciated by her son and his comrades and prompted the village's own vintage needlework restoration group to send presents of their work back to the Morpeth knitters - to be displayed in church in the coming weeks.



Back in Morpeth, Simon is already planning yet another trip in the New Year. His intention this time is to prioritise the delivery of thermal underwear, hygiene and sanitary items, children's clothes and donations to buy building materials to help repair the little school in the village of Kadyshche in the Volyn Oblast. See the photo of the school's 21 children. So, any contributions will still be gratefully received at church.

Submitted by Keith Stead