







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



 <p>The United Reformed Church</p>	
	



December 2025
& January 2026

Website: Urc-morpeth.org.uk

St George's Diary Dates for December

Mon 1st	6.30pm	Life Remembered Service
Wed 3rd	12.30pm 7.00pm	WOW Midweek Service Conversations About
Thurs 4th		Advent Course
Sat 6th	10.00am 7.30pm	Coffee Morning for Ukrainian Friends Country Dance Club
Sun 7th	10.30am	Morning Worship with Communion
Mon 8th	6.30pm	Community Carol Service
Wed 10th	12.30pm 6.30pm	WOW Midweek Service CT Prayer Meeting
Thurs 11 th		Advent Course
Sat 13th	10.00am	Christmas Coffee Morning
Sun 14th	10.30am	Morning Worship
Wed 17th	12.30pm 7.00pm	WOW Midweek Service Conversations About
Thurs 18th		Advent Course – Final Session
Sat 20th	4.00pm	Carols in the Car Park
Sun 21st	10.30am 6.00pm	Joint Nativity Service at St George's Joint Carol Service at the Methodist Church
Wed 24th	12.30pm 11.30pm	WOW Midweek Service Christmas Eve Carol Service
Thurs 25th	10.00am	Christmas Day Service
Sun 28th	10.30am	Morning Worship No Evening Service

Stewards Duties for December

7	Linda Glascott & Christine Oakes
14	Susan Sanderson & Gillian Irvine
21	Madeline & Sarah Cleverley
28	Gordon Slack & Christine Hawkins

Flower Rota for December

	Dorothy Luke Church Decorated For Christmas
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Diary Dates for January 2026 are on inside back page

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 Mobile 07714481089 783434 liz.kelly@jcpce.com	
	Cobweb Orchestra 7.30 – 9.30pm At St Georges Contact: Christine Oakes 518608 or Penny Oxley 514612	
WED	Morning Badminton: 9.30am Sarah Cleverley	515257
	Knitter, Natter Group 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 (not August) Christine Oakes	518608

Coffee Mornings with our Ukrainian friends take place on the first Saturday of each month so that they can meet with us and also catch up with each other and iron out any small problems.

Come and celebrate with us this Advent and Christmas.

Sunday 30 November - 10:30am
Toy Service

Monday 1 December - 6:00pm
A Life Remembered service

Sunday 7 December - 10:30am
Morning service with Communion

Monday 8 December - 6:30pm
Community Carol Service

Sunday 14 December - 10:30am
Morning Worship

Saturday 20 December - 4:00pm
Carols in the Car Park

Sunday 21 December - 10:30
All Age Nativity Service

Wednesday 24 December - 11:30pm
Midnight Service

Thursday 25 December - 10:00am
Christmas Morning Service

ST GEORGE'S UNITED REFORMED CHURCH MORPETH

DIARY DATES FOR JANUARY 2026

Sat 3 rd	Coffee Morning for Ukrainian Friends 10.00 am to Noon
Sun 4 th	Morning Worship with Communion
Wed 7 th	WOW Midweek Service @ 12.30 CT Prayer Meeting 6.30 to 7.30 pm
Sat 10 th	Country Dance Club in Hall 7.30 pm
Sun 11 th	Morning Worship
Wed 14 th	WOW Midweek Service at 12.30 pm Conversations about at 7.00 pm
Sat 17 th	Manager's Coffee Morning & sale of overbought Christmas goods 10.00 am to Noon
Sun 18 th	Morning Worship
Wed 21 st	WOW Midweek Service @ 12.30 CT Prayer Meeting 6.30 to 7.30 pm
Sun 25 th	Morning Worship with Orchestra CHURCH MEETING Evening Service 6.30 pm
Wed 28 th	WOW Midweek Service Conversations about at 7.00 pm

Stewards Duties for January

4	Ron & Shirley Forster
11	Ken & Sally Davidson
18	Karen Howe & Susan Sanderson
25	Gillian Irvine & Linda Glascott

For Januarys' Flower Rota please see notice board in the Vestibule.

**A LIFE
REMEMBERED**



**A SERVICE TO REMEMBER THOSE
WHO ARE NOT ABLE TO CELEBRATE
THE CHRISTMAS SEASON WITH US**

**1 DECEMBER 2025
6:00 PM**

**ST GEORGE'S UNITED REFORMED
CHURCH MORPETH**

A Message from our Minister Revd Julian Sanders

Dear Friends

I've been re-watching one of my favourite black and white movies recently, "The Bishop's Wife" with David Niven as the hapless Bishop and Cary Grant as the charming angel. In that film, Cary Grant does not look like anything like an angel, just an ordinary (if not quite handsome) person who has an extraordinary effect on the people he meets. Angels come in all shapes and sizes, but inevitably they always make an impact on the people they encounter.

Back in the 7th Century, while Cuthbert was busy in charge of hospitality at the monastery in the city of Ripon, he noticed a young man sitting outside the walls on a cold frosty morning. Without hesitation Cuthbert gathered up the young man and ushered him into the monastery to make him more comfortable. Cuthbert knelt and washed the man's feet to warm them. And while they were waiting for the kitchens to bake the day's bread, Cuthbert sat and prayed for the man.

When the bread was baked, Cuthbert set the table for the stranger. But as he went to get the warm food, the young man disappeared, leaving three great loaves of bread. Bread that was warm and had the most amazing aroma. Cuthbert realised the stranger must have been an angel, for the loaves were of heavenly making: "They excel the lily in whiteness, the rose in fragrance, and honey in taste".

There are many such encounters recorded in the life of St Cuthbert, and angelic visitors like this were a regular feature for the Celtic saints. In the Christmas story too, encounters with angels carry the message of Christmas along.

The angel Gabriel brings astonishing news to Mary: she will bear the Son of God. To Joseph, an angel appears in a dream, calming his fears and guiding him to trust God's plan. The shepherds on the hillside are terrified when the sky fills with light. Yet the angel's first words are: "*Do not be afraid.*" The heavenly host bursts into song: "*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace.*"

Their praise is contagious, drawing shepherds, wise men, and us into the wonder of Christ's birth. Advent is a season to join the angels in that worship, lifting our voices in carols and prayers and we hope you will be able to join us for some of the special services we are holding during the season.

This year, you will probably have heard, that our church celebrates 10 years of distributing knitted angels around the town. Since angels started to be distributed here, five thousand angels have been knitted by church members and others in the community, providing a whole host of knitted heavenly (and sometimes very odd looking) messengers.

Each encounter with these angelic visitors has an impact on those who come across them. We have heard how they have been a real comfort during times of illness, or have given a smile to a child who was missing the family dog that had died, or just that people have not felt so alone at Christmas.

I can't promise you a handsome angel like Cary Grant, or a champion breadmaker like St Cuthbert's visitor, but I do hope that you might have your own encounter with an angel this Christmas. Just someone, quite ordinary, who might open your eyes to the message of Christmas and transform your heart just a little, so that you might be filled with joy, and join in singing "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace."

I pray you all are filled with joy and peace this Christmas,

Julian



St George's United Reformed Church
Bridge Street, Morpeth

Coffee Morning And Sale of Hand Crafted Christmas Floral Decorations

Saturday 13th December
10am – Noon



Christmas Cake Raffle – Hamper Raffle,
Home Made Cakes, Jams & Preserves.
Coffee or Tea & Mince Pies.

FREE ENTRY

Lift Access - Proceeds in aid of Church Funds.

Christmas Coffee Morning 13th December

The Social Committee and Flower Committee are holding a coffee morning in the church hall on Saturday 13th December.

Hamper raffle

We are asking for small non-perishable items for the hamper raffle. These can be left in the box in the vestibule cupboard or given to me, Sarah Cleverley, by Sunday 7th December.



Cakes-Jams-Marmalade and Chutneys

Any donation of homemade cakes, jams, marmalade and chutneys would be most appreciated. These can be brought to the church hall on Friday 12th December between 2pm and 4pm or on the day.

Sarah Cleverley

If anyone would like to pre-order either a table arrangement or a basket, would you please let Dorothy Luke know before Monday 8 December. Please state your preference when ordering. Many thanks.



Dorothy Luke

Wordsearch

Did the Old Testament expect

Jesus to come? Yes indeed! Here are just some examples of OT prophesies:

He would be born of a virgin. 'The virgin will conceive and give birth to a Son and will call Him Immanuel.' (Isaiah 7:14)

He would be born in Bethlehem.

'But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel...' (Micah 5:2)

His lineage would be of the line of David. 'I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land.' (Jeremiah 23:5-6).

He would bring healing. 'Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy.' (Isaiah 35:5-6)

He would be crucified. They pierce my hands and my feet. All my bones are on display; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment. (Psalm 22)

He would rise from the dead. 'You will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, nor will you let your faithful one see decay...' (Psalm 16: 8-11)

Born Virgin Immanuel Bethlehem Ruler Israel David King Just Right Healing Blind Deaf Lame Mute Crucified Pierce Hands Feet Gloat Rise Dead Abandon Decay Realm Solution on page 19

H	L	T	H	G	I	R	T	B	A	L	E
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That well known pilot...At Sunday school, the younger children were drawing pictures to illustrate a biblical story. The teacher was startled to see one little boy was drawing an airplane. "This is the Flight into Egypt," the little boy explained. "See, here is Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus. And this," he said, pointing to the figure in the front of the plane, "is Pontius. He's the Pilot."

Know what? ...As we were putting out cookies for Father Christmas one Christmas Eve, I accidentally dropped one. I picked it up and dusted it off before placing it back on the plate. "You can't do that," argued my four-year-old. But I assured him that Father Christmas would never know. He shot me a dubious look. "So, he knows if I've been bad or good all year, but he doesn't know if you dropped his cookie on the floor?"

Nativity set...A man visiting his daughter and her family for Christmas was admiring the beautiful nativity set in her hallway. His young granddaughter came up to him, and he asked her if she knew what it was.

"Sure I do," she replied. "It's breakable."



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**CAROLS
IN THE
CAR PARK**

**20 DECEMBER
4:00 PM**

**AN OUTDOOR CAROL SERVICE
WITH SEASONAL REFRESHMENTS**

**ST GEORGE'S UNITED REFORMED
CHURCH MORPETH**



**COMMUNITY
CAROL
SERVICE**

**8 DECEMBER 2025
6:30 PM**

**ST GEORGE'S UNITED REFORMED
CHURCH MORPETH**



Angels of all colours, shapes and sizes are arriving already. Thank you to everyone who is sending them. Looks like our tenth year is going to be better than ever. They will be blessed during the service on 14th December. Thank you, **Patricia**.

I am putting out a plea for BLANKETS (not new), for People's Kitchen. If you have any spare blankets, I can collect any that cannot be brought to church. Many thanks in advance, Christine Richardson Tel: 513913



Saturday 17th January at 10.00 am to Noon
Managers' Coffee Morning

It's not too soon to start thinking ahead!! Sale of overbought Christmas gifts, Cards, Books, Jigsaws and Raffle. Also an opportunity to renew subscriptions to the 100 Club – or to join for the first time. We need gifts for the stall and for the Raffle. This is our first fund-raising event in 2026. Donations may be left in the box in the vestibule or hand them to Joyce Calcraft or any Manager.

Please remember that we cannot sell second-hand or used items (except for Books and Jigsaws).

St George's United Reformed Church
Bridge Street, Morpeth

MANAGERS 2026

COFFEE MORNING

SALE OF OVERBOUGHT
CHRISTMAS GIFTS,

CARDS, BOOKS, & JIGSAWS
RAFFLE.



TEA, COFFEE AND
HOMEMADE SCONES.

Saturday 17th January



10am to Noon



Free Entry & Lift Access

ALL WELCOME



Narcotics Anonymous Hope & Light Meeting Boxing Day Unity Event

3pm-8pm, Friday 26th December, 2025

Everyone Welcome — Drop-In Any Time

St George's United Reformed Church,
Bridge Street, Morpeth NE61 1PD

Festive snacks, soft drinks, hugs & hospitality from 3-8pm
Sharing experience of how NA works at 4pm & 5pm
Party Games at 3.30pm, 4.30pm & 5.30pm
NA meeting will run as usual from 6-7.30pm



FREE EVENT OPEN TO ALL (addicts, family, friends & allies)
NA: Narcotics Anonymous, Never Alone, Never Again



"Goodness! is it time for Christmas Fair organising, carol service planning and nativity play rehearsals already?!"

Church Notice Board

This evening at 7 PM there will be a hymn singing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.

The Associate Minister unveiled the church's new campaign slogan last Sunday: 'I Upped My Pledge - Up Yours.'

T

he Wrong Gift...A young couple began to assemble a special Christmas gift they had bought for their children. They had bought a kit for a tree house, but it didn't make sense. Then they realised that the materials were for a sailboat, so they wrote to the company to complain. The company's reply was brief: "While we regret the inconvenience this mistake must have caused you, we are more concerned about the man who is out on a lake somewhere, trying to sail your tree house."



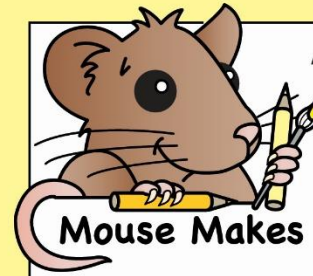
Sara preferred to let people work out the hymns for themselves

Solutions

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

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T	I	E	D	E	A	D	Y	D	E	T	F



Mouse Makes

At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Jesus, God's Son and our Saviour coming into the world as a baby, and we look forward to the time when Jesus will come again, not as a baby but as the King of kings and Lord of lords!

read
John 14:3

A baby needs clothes to keep warm like a snuggly sleep suit or a vest and nappy.

What were you dressed in?
Jesus was wrapped in

.....
read Luke 2:7

A baby needs somewhere to be born like at home or in a hospital.

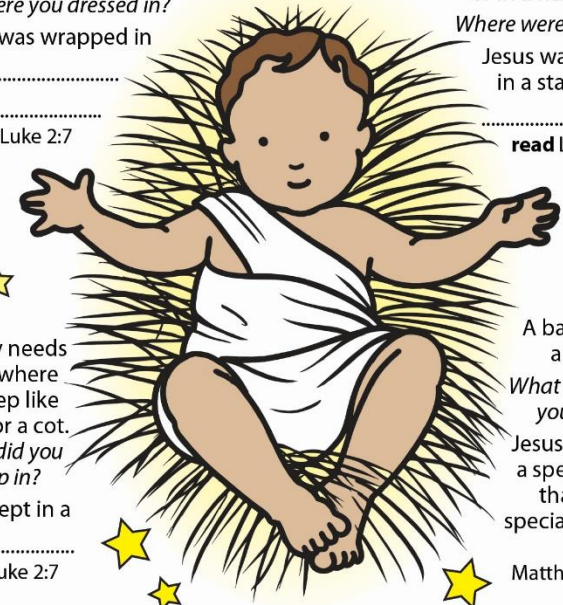
Where were you born?
Jesus was born in a stable in

.....
read Luke 2:1-6

A baby needs somewhere to sleep like a crib or a cot.
What did you sleep in?

Jesus slept in a
.....
read Luke 2:7

A baby needs a name.
What name were you called?
Jesus was given a special name that had a special meaning.
read
Matthew 1:21-23



HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

NADOLIG LLAWEN ✨ NOLLAIG CHRÏDHEIL ✨ NOLLAG SHONA
JOYEUX NOËL • FELIZ NAVIDAD • BUON NATALE • GOD JUL • FROHE WEIHNACHTEN

Great Bavington United Reformed Church

Here is the news from Great Bavington:

December

Services

Sunday 7 December, 2.30pm, led by Rev Julian Sanders

Sunday 21 December, Carol Service, 2.30pm, led by Rev Julian Sanders

Christmas Eve, Wednesday 24 December, mince pies etc at 6.00pm followed by carols at 6.30pm.

If you want to sing carols on Christmas Eve, but don't want to stay up until midnight - this is the place to be!

Services are usually streamed on the Morpeth and Area URC YouTube channel. You can watch them live, or watch them

later. <https://www.youtube.com/@morpethandareaurc8357>

Film Night

TUESDAY 9 December (not Monday 8th), 7.00pm for 7.15pm start.

Mission Impossible: Final Reckoning. Starring Tom Cruise, who does all his own stunts. "Wildly silly and wildly entertaining." (The Guardian review)

Refreshments provided. Donations welcome towards expenses.

January

Services

Sunday 4 January, 2.30pm, led by Rev Julian Sanders

Sunday 18 January, 2.30pm, led by Rev Julian Sanders

Film Night

Monday 12 January. 7.00pm for 7.15pm start.

Film t.b.a. - see the church's Facebook page nearer the time.

Refreshments provided. Donations welcome towards expenses.

History Night

Tuesday 27 January, 7.00pm

An informal evening of local history discussion. Do bring along any local history material of interest.

The church is openThe church is open during the daytime for visitors and walkers.

Keep in touch

Please see www.facebook.com/GreatBavingtonURC for updates on services, events, etc, or email bavingtonchurch@gmail.com, or phone 01830 540350.

Nicola Bell

Widdrington United Reformed Church

PRAYING TOGETHER

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

During December and January, please continue to pray for:

All war zones - especially those that have dropped out of the news yet still continue.

Peace negotiations, and that any peace agreements will hold.

Refugees

Those suffering religious or ethnic persecution

Victims of genocide

Victims of natural disasters

The work of relief agencies

Health workers and workers in essential industries and services

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

Those in financial difficulties, and fuel poverty

The homeless

"Prayer, the Church's 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 for January and February by Kathleen. Christmas Flowers: The tree will be delivered in time for Sunday 14th, probably Saturday 13th, decorating from 2.00pm.

Window decorations on Saturday 20th, again from 2.00pm.

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 £600. We get a payout each quarter provided at least £15.00 has been raised. Latest payment in November was £35.15. Thank you for spending!

Fund raising: No special events to report this month, however, just a note to say we finally sent £300 to Tear Fund.

Any cash donations for the Salvation Army will be detailed in the next issue, which is February.

Do you have an idea for fund raising? Whether a social event, or something else, please speak to the Elders about it.

Worship:

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

You are invited to join us for coffee/tea and biscuits (sometimes cake, or even, in December, mince pies!) after the service.

Remember: Christmas Eve Candlelight service at 6.30pm. Christmas Day Service at 10.45am

Social:

The Christmas Lunch at Warkworth House is on Saturday 6th December at 1.00pm. You should have already placed your order.

Remember, if you have a good idea for a social event which you think people will enjoy, please suggest it to the Elders (or organise it yourself!)

Regular events:

1st Wednesday: Coffee Club meets on the 1st Wednesday in the month at various coffee shops in the area, or in the Sunday School Room. December's meeting will be at Circa in on December 3rd. Details of the January meeting to be confirmed.

(Do you know a good local coffee shop which could cope with a sudden influx of 12+ people and has easy access for our less mobile members? Please tell Ena Whinham about it.)

Prayer Group: 1st Friday at 10.30am (please note new time). We gather at Cook's Hemmel, Causey Park. You are welcome to join us, or tell us any of your concerns for prayer. (If you are interested in joining us, please speak to one of the Elders, as we occasionally alter the date without notice)

Open Church: Open Church will continue, on Wednesday mornings from 10.30am, weather permitting. Please join us for fellowship and refreshments, and the opportunity for quiet reflection in the church. Enquiries to the above email address. (Please let me know if you intend to come if you don't usually, as it will otherwise be cancelled at short notice if my regular can't make it! Cancellations will be advertised on WhatsApp.)

Please note that there will be **NO** Open Church on the 1st Wednesday of the month. Apologies to anyone affected.

Facebook: If you are on Facebook, have you checked out our Facebook page yet? Search for Widdrington United Reformed Church. Please like us and tell me 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

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.

WhatsApp: A WhatsApp group has been set up. To join please give Kathleen your mobile number, and accept your invitation. Please note: as I have now joined the group, information from me will increasingly appear there!

Churches Together in Widdrington and Ulgham

Rev'd Julian Sanders will be continue the Advent Course on Friday afternoons at 2.00pm in our hall from November 28th. The theme is The Nativity.

On December 6th our Methodist friends will host The Big Sing for Christian Aid in the Community Centre between 10am and 12noon. Please try to support this.

The Community Choir continues to meet. Meetings in December and January will be arranged as we go. We are going to have two meetings a month, alternating between Holy Trinity and the URC. We will be taking part in The Big Sing, the Carol Service at St John's, Ulgham on 21st December at 5pm, and the Carol Service at the URC on Christmas Eve.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: Saurday 17th: Evening Prayer at Holy Trinity, 5.00pm; Se twice and Lunch: URC,12.00 noon. United Service: Community Centre, 10.30am.

Next meeting: Thursday 8th January 7.00 pm at URC.

FEM

December and January Rota

Sunday	Preacher	Vestry	Door/Offering
7th December	Rev'd Ron Forster	Fiona Middlemist	Kathleen Bailey Audrey Grieves
14th December	Rev'd Julian Sanders	Kathleen Bailey	Fiona Middlemist Ruth Gordon
21st December	Rev'd Karen Smith	Diana Hogg	Elizabeth Barber Susan Hampton
28th December	Worship team	Fiona Middlemist	Diana Hogg Diane Cooke
4th January	Worship Team	Kathleen Bailey	Fiona Middlemist Ruth Gordon
11th January	Rev'd Julian Sanders Holy Communion	Diana Hogg	Kathleen Bailey Audrey Grieves
18th January	Worship Team	Fiona Middlemist	Elizabeth Barber Susan Hampton
25th January	Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	United Service	Community Centre 10.30am