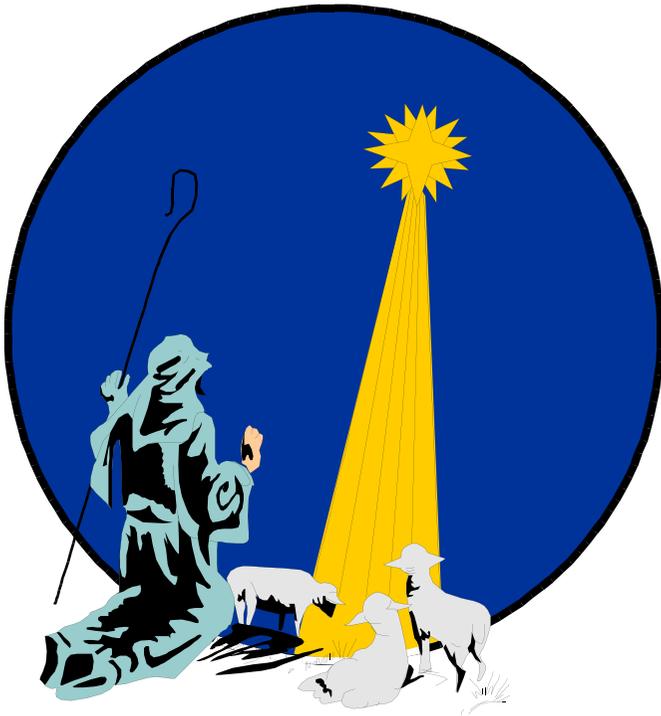


BRIGHTSTAR



December 2010
January 2011

From the Manse

Dear Friends,
What a Year!

As a family we have had an incredible year! The highlights of which have included the birth a granddaughter, Naomi, the baptism of a grandson, Alexander and the marriage of our nephew David to Leanne. The baptism and marriage I conducted, which gave me a great deal of personal pleasure. I also believe the events have helped strengthen the bond of family ties which is often very difficult to achieve with members living in Yorkshire, Wales, Norfolk, Suffolk (that's us!), various parts of the Midlands, Derbyshire and even as far afield as Peru!



The story of the very first Christmas over two thousand years ago reminds us of the long distances family members had to travel for the annual census which required everyone to return to the head of the family's place of birth to register. Mary and Joseph travelled a distance of some 80 miles journeying from Nazareth to Bethlehem knowing that Mary would have her child soon after reaching their destination. Tradition has it that Mary rode on a donkey with Joseph leading it and because the journey would require detours to avoid rough ground and hostile people it is estimated it would have taken them at least a week! It's not surprising then that on the night they arrived in Bethlehem their son was born.



The account of this story recorded in the bible doesn't include any family re-unions, that is, there is no mention of parents, grandparents or anyone else from Mary or Joseph's families visiting the stable with presents of baby wear and toys. However, it tells us that visitors from the local community and from another country did come bearing gifts. Shepherds in the hills surrounding Bethlehem after hearing the news from an angel hurried to see the baby and knew at once this was no ordinary child. A few days later, a time which we celebrate at the beginning of a new year, wise men from the

East arrived after travelling a very long way guided by a bright star which led them to the same stable in Bethlehem. They brought gifts and bowed in worship realising God had indeed sent someone very special into the world.

That special child was, Jesus Christ the Son of God, born to a human family whose first visitors were strangers reminding us that this baby belonged to the world. Jesus was sent as a personal gift to everyone both then and in every generation since. God invites us all to belong to his family and by doing so the ties that bind us together can strengthen our community living and end division in our world. It sounds impossible but with God everything is possible as the Christmas story shows!

Why not come along to one or more of our church services and /or events this Christmas and New Year and learn more about this precious gift for you and the entire world! They are all detailed below and overleaf

***God be with you and your family this Christmas
and may he bless you all with a Great and Happy New Year.***

David & Elizabeth

WORSHIP

Sunday 5th December

9.45am Revd David Kemble, including the infant baptism of
Jaimee Jae Belton

Saturday 11th December

4.00pm Trinity Young Family Christingle

Sunday 12th December

9.45am Mr Roger Fern

Saturday 18th - Monday 20th December

Trinity Angel Festival

WORSHIP (CONTINUED)

Sunday 19th December

9.15am Breakfast for 9.45am Christmas Cafe Worship
- The Promise

6.00pm Trinity Carol Service (*Followed by drinks & mince pies*)

Tuesday 21st December

7.00pm Carols by Candlelight (*Followed by drinks & mince pies*)

Friday 24th December

7.00pm Kirton carol service , followed by refreshments

7.00pm Trimley Carol Service

11.15pm Mince pies at Trinity, followed by 11.30pm communion

Christmas Day Christmas Praise

9.45am Revd David Kemble and Robin Pattinson

10.30 am Trinity Christmas Day Service (with URC)

Sunday 26th December at Trimley

11.00am Mission Area United Service with Revd David Kemble

Sunday 2nd January 2011

9.45am Continuing our Christmas thanksgiving

Sunday 9th January (Holy Communion)

9.45am Revd David Kemble

Sunday 16th January

9.15am Breakfast for 9.45am Cafe Worship

Sunday 23rd January

9.45am Revd David Kemble

Sunday 30th January

9.45am Mr Grahame Lindsay

Sunday 6th February (Holy Communion)

9.45am Revd David Kemble

FROM THE VESTRY

- a contribution from the team of stewards

Christmas is fast approaching once again, and magazines are full of advice on how to cope with Christmas stress, and give us lists of things to be done at certain times. One item on the list is to write Christmas cards. Some people I know find this a chore, but I love writing cards and try to choose the right card for the right person, not like my husband who just takes them from the box as they come and cross another name off his list.

Very often Christmas is the only time that we get in touch with certain of our friends, and it is so easy to lose track of people due to long distances and moving house, or just misplacing that piece of paper with their address written on it.

You might say that it is easier now to keep in touch by sending e-mails, but how much more personal it is to receive that card through the letterbox and contemplate who sent it by studying the writing on the envelope and looking at the postmark. Very often there will be a letter included in the card and also maybe a photograph showing how big the children have grown.

A few years ago I 'found' my long-lost cousin whom I hadn't seen for 50 years. Due to a family break-up, he moved away as a small child with his mother. I found him and his family by the computer site of Genes Reunited, and we spent a happy day together sharing childhood memories and exchanging photographs. (Computers are useful for some things). Now we exchange Christmas cards and family news.

I read in the paper today that £1 million of Christmas card sales Oxfam receives every year is enough to feed more than 140,000 families, so sending a card this year could help you not only to stay in touch with your loved ones, but could make a difference to the lives of poor people around the world at the same time.

I suppose the moral of this piece is "Keep in touch - send a Christmas card".

A Happy and peaceful Christmas to you all.

Kathy

TREASURER'S REPORT

I missed the last Church Council and my Treasurer's report consisted of a few words in an email and a balance sheet. Heather Farthing suggested that I might publish a few more details in Brightstar, so here goes.

Firstly it is necessary to understand a little bit about the mechanics of the church accounts. The church has several funds which must be kept separate, for example, the money collected at Harvest for the Treehouse Appeal had to be kept separate until it was sent on. Similarly money for the Church Family Weekend and the Slates and Ladders appeal is held for a particular purpose. Whatever does not fall into these categories as known as the General Fund. This fund receives money from the Sunday collection and hall rentals, and pays money for buildings maintenance and for ministers' salaries amongst a whole host of other things.

It is the state of the General Fund which is one of the main indicators as to the financial health of the church. So how are we doing? Well the good news is that we are solvent and had a balance of £5673 at our year-end having had a small surplus in 08-09 and a somewhat larger loss in 09-10. Unfortunately we have only reached this position because in recent years we have received a number of legacies and substantial one-off donations. Whilst I would never discourage anyone from making a donation to the church or remembering Seaton Road in their will, it would be unwise as a church to rely on this source of income.

So what is to be done? The first thing is not to panic, but to start to monitor our finances a bit more closely. We need to know if our expensive problems with the church heating last winter were a mere blip or not. Then we need to look at our income and our expenditure and see how we can maximise our income and perhaps defer some of our expenditure.

I plan to look at this more closely in the months ahead if the editor has room. Meanwhile, do not be downhearted. At least we have a hall with a new roof with proper insulation; and we have sufficient money in the Slates and Ladders Fund to decorate the stained and water damaged areas of the hall next summer.

Malcolm

DECEMBER PRAYER DIARY

Please include the following in your daily prayers:

- 5th Catriona Bentley
- 6th All involved in the administration of Methodism, nationally & locally
- 7th Revd Alan Taylor and all circuit ministers
- 8th Revd David Kemble and his work in this section and the dock chaplaincy
- 9th Parish Nurses
- 10th Revd Michael Allen and Paul Taylor and their work among the elderly and infirm in our part of the town
- 11th St Elizabeth Hospice

- 12th The other churches in the section; Trinity, Trimley and Kirton
- 13th Associated churches in Walton
- 14th Churches Together in Felixstowe
- 15th Forces serving in areas of unrest in the world
- 16th Work of the Leprosy Mission and Bible Society
- 17th School teachers and parents in the run up to Christmas
- 18th Care homes in Felixstowe, staff and patients

- 19th The Christmas cafe service
- 20th Stephen Caley, lay worker at Hollesley Bay prison
- 21st Our Carols by Candlelight service
- 22nd Those who have lost family members during the year, for whom this Christmas will be very difficult
- 23rd Our preparation for Christmas - practical and spiritual
- 24th Family and friends who may be travelling, perhaps to celebrate with you
- 25th Christmas Day Worship. Those separated from their loved ones, and those without relatives and friends

- 26th Hospital & prison staff, those maintaining public services (gas, electricity, water etc.)
- 27th The Street Pastor scheme
- 28th The staff and residents of Norwood
- 29th As a new year approaches, remember those without a job to go to and little hope for the future
- 30th Look back and give thanks for what God has done for you during 2010
- 31st Commit 2011 to God and pray for his blessing on your life and the lives of those close to you

JANUARY PRAYER DIARY

- 1st For our government to lead us wisely through this year
- 2nd For those in authority in our town and district
- 3rd People who feel under pressure at work in home situations
- 4th People of our church fellowship who may be suffering in body, mind or spirit
- 5th Heather Bentley and Stephen Caley (Circuit lay workers)
- 6th Seamen's Mission- Felixstowe Dock and worldwide
- 7th Work among local young people eg Level Two
- 8th Organisations and groups using our church premises
- 9th Staff at Norwood MHA home in Ipswich
- 10th Other Walton churches - St Mary's and Maidstone Rd Baptist
- 11th Felixstowe Street Pastors
- 12th District world partner church - Latvia
- 13th Chairman of our District, Revd Canon Graham Thompson
- 14th Revd David and Elizabeth in all their work
- 15th Ministers of all denominations working in Hollesley Bay prison
- 16th For the individuals of our church family, in all their roles outside church, being witnesses to our faith
- 17th For our team of church stewards
- 18th Christians suffering persecution in Pakistan, Iraq, Afghanistan
- 19th Our circuit superintendent and ministers
- 20th Circuit admin staff eg treasurer, stewards, property etc
- 21st Schools in Felixstowe - in particular Jane Reed with responsibility for two schools
- 22nd Our minister and the dock chaplaincy
- 23rd Paul and Heather as they lead the music in worship
- 24th Churches Together in Felixstowe
- 25th Linda Grimshaw and the staff running the playschool
- 26th For the Boost Bus and its volunteers
- 27th East Anglian Children's Hospice and the Treehouse Appeal
- 28th St Elizabeth Hospice
- 29th Pray for the church leadership team, planning Cafe worship services and other eventsip
- 30th For Catriona
- 31st For social workers as they face difficult choices every day

CIRCUIT ARTS AND CRAFTS FESTIVAL 2011

A copy of the schedule for next year's Arts and Crafts Festival is now on the noticeboard in the vestibule. Please do not remove this copy. If you have access to the internet you can download it from the church website www.seatonroad.org.uk. or if you have a problem with this please have a word with Rose or Mary. The date of next year's Festival is **Saturday 12th March 2011** and it will be held at Museum Street Methodist Church, Ipswich. Please book the date now and also have a look at the schedule to see what you can be working on during the winter.

I will need to have names and classes by **30th January** which is before the next issue of Brightstar. There is something on the schedule for everyone so please see what YOU could enter. As a church we will again be hoping to enter the singing group class. If you would like to join us please have a word with Heather Farthing.

Rosemary and Mary

IT'S NOT MUCH FUN

It's not much fun waiting in a queue
With a list of other things to do.
Patience is a virtue so we're told
But it's no consolation to young or old.
Tomorrow I plan to go into town
But I'll refuse to wear a frown,
I'll queue at the check-out in every shop
And secretly wish they'd all hurry up.
My heating system is on the blink
The plumber will fix it in March - I think.
As the freezing winds get stronger and stronger
His waiting list gets longer and longer.
I'll be a patient patient whilst I wait for the letter
For the hospital appointment to make me feel better.
My name is also on the waiting list
At the opticians, the doctors and the foot specialist.
Here comes the bus, it's ten minutes late
I'm going to miss my special date
And, no doubt, there'll be a queue
At the theatre we are going to.
Maybe if I'm good and don't complain
As I stand at the bus stop in pouring rain,
One day I'll be met at the pearly gate
With a passport to heaven without having to wait.

Freda Batey's entry for last year's poetry class.

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN FELIXSTOWE

Brief notes from the CTiF Forum Meeting held at Ranelagh Road Christian Fellowship on 16th November.

Andy Piper from Ranelagh Rd Christian fellowship opened the meeting with a bible reading and prayer.

Margaret Condict, as the new Moderator, chaired the meeting.

Feedback

Praise on the Prom: the involvement of the Ipswich Community Choir was appreciated and it was felt useful to have updates from local community projects e.g Pregnancy Crisis, Parish Nursing, Town Pastors etc.

Forthcoming events

□ The possible joint use of national advertising was discussed but felt it was rather late to organise for this Christmas. *S/Rd had, in fact, already been looking at the suggested Christmas poster 'He's on His way'.*

□ United service Sunday 23rd January 2011. This will be held at St John's Church with pre service praise from 6pm and the service starting at 6.30pm. The preacher will be the Archdeacon of Suffolk, Dr Judy Hunt and the theme 'All things in common'. It is hoped to have displays around the church from organisations, for people to look at over coffee. Each church will be presented with a candle during the service which will be taken back to the churches.

□ Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 18th – 25th January 2011. Sue Hockenhull reported that the prayer team is headed up by Pam Hewitt and Paul Taylor but Paul is standing down from the team. It has been decided to have a change from the normal week of prayer programme and this year (2011) events that are normally held in the various churches during the week will be opened up to give people an opportunity to visit other churches. The full list will be published in due course. Churches are encouraged to use the printed material published for this special week.

□ The next Churches Together in Suffolk meeting will be held in Felixstowe on 14th March 2011 and all will be welcome to attend.

Welcome pack for new housing

On behalf of the Methodist Felixstowe Mission Area, Heather Bentley gave a short presentation starting with Luke 10 verse 37, 'Jesus teaches us that good neighbours are those that show kindness'. Before 2025 it is proposed that an extra 1400 new homes will be built in the area. Heather brought a sample 'pack' which included information on each of the Methodist churches in the area, local information such as GP surgeries, library etc and asked whether CTF

would like to be involved in this project and information could be extended to include all local churches. Christchurch already have a welcome bag which they give to people moving into the area – this includes tea, coffee etc. The meeting agreed to go ahead jointly with the welcome packs.

Impressions on the Pope's visit

Mike Palmer told us of his pilgrimage to Hyde Park to see the Pope (in 1982 he had gone as an atheist but was converted 2 years later). He told of the great sense of expectation as everyone waited for the Pope's arrival and the awe as the Pope raised the bread and 80,000 fell to their knees in silence.

World development issues

- Felixstowe Christian Aid Committee is in need of more people on it. Many churches do not have a representative.
- Shared Interest. An action guide for churches was available. Churches or individuals can invest in this project where money is used to help those in poorer countries set up businesses. Monies invested earn slightly below the national average interest rate and can be taken back by the investor when needed.

Treasurer's report

Gordon Cooper, treasurer, reported that we had enough funds to keep us going for the year and would be able to use some funds to produce the welcome packs.

Updates

- Hope Trust (formerly Felixstowe Trust for the Christian Care of Older People). Rev. Michael Allen spoke on behalf of the trust reporting that they are changing focus and are now working on the relief of loneliness. They believe that nobody should be lonely in our friendly town. Help is needed to find the lonely people.
- Boost (Felixstowe Youth Worker Trust). Rev Robert Hinsley reported that the lack of funds reported at the last meeting was still a problem. The average cost of the Boost work was £1800 per month. They have a guaranteed income of £500 per month but that obviously leaves a considerable shortfall. Adrian Wolton (Felixstowe Youth Worker) will be leaving in due course and they will need to advertise nationally for a replacement. In the long term the Boost bus will need to be replaced so they are requesting money from churches. Volunteers are also needed to man the bus. There is a possibility that the bus may have an evening in Trimley in the future. Someone is always available to talk to churches if they would like to hear more on the work of Boost.
- Town Pastors. Anne Clarke the Town Pastor co-ordinator reported that two teams of Town Pastors were out in Felixstowe most

Saturday evenings with a prayer team at the base at Trinity Methodist church as well as home prayers. Town Pastors were there to offer a listening ear, to assist people in getting home safely, to give water to dehydrated people and to defuse potential problems. Since they had been out in Felixstowe violence against people had dropped by 25% and criminal damage had dropped 87.5%. It costs £12,500 a year to run and a very successful coffee morning had recently been held which raised £450. On 6th February 2011 there will be a Town Pastor evening at the Salvation Army and recruitment will start again in March.

Any other business

- Maidstone Road Baptist and Seaton Road Methodist were working together on Parish Nursing.
- 2011 is 400 years since the King James Bible was printed. Various events are being organised to celebrate this. Biblefresh is a national campaign. Churches Together in Bury St Edmunds have several events planned for May and June. The 5 benefices of Kirton, Falkenham, Nacton, Bucklesham and Levington are planning a 24hour bible reading event. A list of the most important 100 passages of the bible is being issued for people to read over the year.
- Lent groups. Joint lent groups are being looked at.
- The United Christian Broadcasters will be at the River of Life and Salvation Army over the weekend of 19th and 20th February.

CTF Newsletter

The meeting then split into small groups to discuss a new newsletter for all local churches entitled 'Together'. We looked at a draft copy and agreed that we would like to go ahead with this. Margaret Condict would get the first issue published as soon as possible.

Mary Pattinson.

Churches Together in Felixstowe

Sunday January 23rd 2011

**St. John's Church, Felixstowe 6.30pm
(pre-service praise from 6p.m)**

Speaker: The Archdeacon of Suffolk, Dr Judy Hunt

GLADYS COOK -from David's funeral tribute

Gladys or Glad as she was fondly known, especially here at Church was a saint in every aspect of the word. She was faithful, loving, kind, gentle, filled with humility and possessed a wonderful sense of fun! Born in Henley on Thames she moved as a young girl to High Wycombe along with her family. Eric and Glad first met outside her family home in 1940 as Eric trundled by on board a military vehicle that had a large gun mounted upon it. The sight drew many onto the street but Eric's attention was taken with an attractive blonde, Glad, whose Mum chatted briefly with him on that day discovering he came from her part of the country, Felixstowe.

It was some months later that Eric, on being posted to High Wycombe was able to return to see Snowball, his nickname for Glad! He knew how to treat a lady for their courting often took place on a bench inside a graveyard! The romance, however, blossomed and they were engaged in 1941. Their dreams of a life together had to be put on hold, though, for Eric was posted to the Far East. This meant being parted for 4 years but the happy day eventually arrived when they were married on August 25th 1945 at High Wycombe Parish Church. They moved to Felixstowe where Eric returned to his old job. The homes they have enjoyed making were not only spotless on the inside but in the garden it would be hard to find a weed anywhere – armed with gloves and secateurs and wearing her comfy gardening shoes Glad loved to attend to her flowers!

In time their beloved sons were born and the family that Glad and Eric are immensely proud of grew to the size it is today. To Glad, the centre of life was her family and also Church. She was a regular here and enjoyed the fellowship on Sundays and midweek meetings such as Young Wives and the Ladies Evening Fellowship. Glad lived out her life of faith with great enthusiasm and energy, whether that was as a communion steward or a welcoming face on the door. Shirl recalls Glad and Monica being the people she met when coming to this church for the very first time and she has never forgotten the warm and friendly greeting she received. She attended church family weekends away and where I suspect she had great fun sharing a room with Denise and Stella. The time she performed with the children while others sang 'Teach me to Dance', was a priceless moment never to be forgotten. Her care and love for individuals was outstanding for Glad had a God-given gift of relating to people of different ages and backgrounds, helped enormously one suspects by her amazing laughter, humour and bubbly personality. How many of us here today have been greeted by Glad with a smile and the endearing words "Hello duck"

Her faith was extremely important to her and she loved to encourage others with such knowledge of a loving God praying for her family and others on a daily basis, even relying on photographs to remind her to ask a blessing on them all. She did speak out when she thought it was necessary although always in an in-offensive way that proved helpful in seeing the way forward! She had reservations about Café style worship but became a great supporter when she saw the effect it had on all ages in knowing her God. Her final few months were a struggle for Glad but she bore them without complaint and always gave visitors an encouraging word and smile. In hospital she was the heart and soul of her ward and the nurses were very sorry to see her leave. We will never forget Glad during our lifetimes, her love of and faith in God and his people is testimony to a Christian who has earned the right to inherit the full measure of life in the kingdom of God.

DAILY STUDY NOTES FOR 2011

Just as vitamins and minerals are a key to physical health, so Christians over the years have discovered that there are things that help strengthen faith and spiritual health. One of these is regular private prayer, another is reading the Bible.

In the hectic round of our every day lives, it is often very difficult to fit in quiet time, and even if we do pause for breath and get out our Bibles, where do we start? If you struggle with this dilemma read on...

There are several organisations that produce guides to help those who want to strengthen their faith this way. They produce a variety of very different solutions to the problem.

Some provide a daily passage printed out to read. Some indicate a passage and provide a short commentary. Some provide prayers as well. Some are targeted at children, some at teenagers, some at those into theology, some at those who have a simpler faith. Some require daily reading, others a few times a week. There are those in bold print or on tape for those finding reading difficult. If you would like to know more please have a chat with me.

If you decide you would like to place a regular order (from January 2011) with others in the church please let me know *as soon as possible*. (Fx 279998). We will then place orders in time to get them to you for the start of the New Year! I shall assume all those currently taking notes will continue unless they let me know otherwise.

Heather Bentley

CHRISTMASTREE FESTIVAL

The Salvation Army are holding a charity Christmas tree festival between 14th and 17th December. Our children from FUNKY will be making decorations to decorate a tree at the festival on behalf of Seaton Road. We have chosen to donate any money collected from our tree to the EACH Treehouse Appeal.

If you are in town between 11am and 6pm on the 14th to 17th December please visit the festival to view our youngsters' handiwork as well as decorated trees from many other groups and charities.

THANKS

To Russell Cook for playing The Last Post at our Remembrance Service on November 14th. It made the service very poignant and helped focus our thoughts on remembering lives lost, or suffering caused, by world conflicts.

Dear friends

Just a note to thank all my friends at Seaton Road for your cards, kind messages and prayers during my stay in hospital. I am on the road to recovery and thank you for your kind support,

Len Jessop.

BRIGHTSTAR

Hazel Rusby has decided to relinquish her role as editor of Brightstar for the first half of each year. I am sure you would all like to join in my thanks to her for her hard and sustained work over many years.

In order to give us a little breathing space in the search for a new editor, I will continue producing the magazine for the first half of next year, and hopefully by July we will have found a willing volunteer. If you think you could be that volunteer, then please let me know!

Heather F