

Brightstar



December 2011
January 2012

Brightstar is the newsletter of Seaton Road Methodist Church
Felixstowe, IP11 9BT

Contact our minister, Rev David Kemble on 01394 282023
or email through our website at www.seatonroad.org.uk

Services for December/January:

December 4th
9.45 a.m.

Rev Barry Middleton

December 11th
9.45 a.m.

Rev David Kemble

*Introducing Lorna Bellamy, our new Parish Nurse
Including Holy Communion
Coffee will be served following this service*

December 18th
Breakfast from 9.15 a.m.

Christmas Café Worship!

Christmas Day
9.45 a.m.

Rev David Kemble

Mission Area Family Service

January 1st 2012
9.45 a.m.

Local Arrangement

Coffee will be served following this service

January 8th
9.45 a.m.

Rev Michael Allen

Including Holy Communion

January 15th
Breakfast from 9.15 a.m.

Café Worship! – Rev David Kemble

January 22nd
9.45 a.m.

Mrs Mary Dixon

January 29th
9.45 a.m.

Mrs Margaret Woods



Dear Friends,

As you may be aware the theme chosen to link our services throughout December and into the New Year is “*Journeys*”. We began considering the start of the journey taken by Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem as early as November 27th, the first Sunday in Advent when knitted figures of the Holy couple



by

Mexicans (how amusing they were) but their plea for us to provide Maria and Jose with hospitality (posada) over the next few weeks was a request that helped us to see the part we are asked to play in the continued journey of the Church of Jesus Christ today. Let’s consider further the figures central to this journey that spans Christmas and the New Year!

Joseph was an ordinary carpenter from Nazareth, not a politician, not a priest, no celebrity, just a good honourable man. A man at home in his workshop shaping natural wood into something useful and beautiful. He understood timber, could sculpt it, manipulate it and bend it to his will. In his workshop he was king, he was in control, he could be the creator.

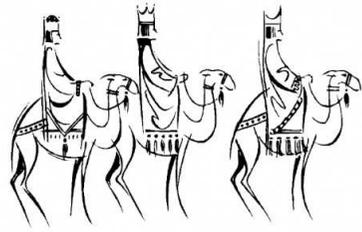
Mary was young, how would she cope with childbirth? It would leave her weak. She would have many sleepless nights to follow. And she would be far away from all of the normal support networks a young Jewish mother would expect to rely on. What would life hold for such a young mother now? Had she ruined her life, limited her prospects and become a fallen woman?

Jesus was a small baby, helpless, only able to communicate through crying and cooing and wind induced smiles. Lying in a manger, wrapped in swaddling clothes and unaware of the profound, devastating effect his presence would have on Bethlehem, on Jerusalem, on his parents and far beyond.



Shepherds high in the hills with just each other and a distant howling dog for company were wrapped against the cold night, dreaming into the flickering glow of the warming fire – remembering how just a few nights ago a real light shone from the face of a baby silently drowning the sound of the angels song and eclipsing the brightest star.

Wise men were travelling on a quest in search of a king. Clumsily asking questions in the wrong place, of the wrong people, looking for the wrong kind of answer, from the wrong kind of king. Yet they arrive, bow down and worship, offer gifts and finding an answer for their journeying before they run from the tyrant King Herod.



Now it's our turn to journey to Bethlehem. We must sing the celebratory song of hope. We must travel like shepherds and wise men to find the answer to life's mystery being revealed in Jesus Christ. We too can marvel once again at God made one with us. This human story, this divine story, this is our story; our journey that once travelled changes everything and offers an answer to the eternal human search for meaning.

Come and join the journey of celebration and allow yourself to be astonished once more by the power of this simple and yet profound story of God!

A very Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year to you all

David and Elizabeth

From the Vestry Stewards.....

The Nativity must be one of the most well known stories in the world. Children (and adults) all over the world will be rehearsing the familiar scenes and dressing up in tea-towels and holding toy lambs! We all know the order of events and how the baby Jesus came to be born in a stable, and that the shepherds and the wise men came to visit Him. Sometimes I wonder if the whole story is perhaps just too familiar to us? Perhaps we forget how truly amazing and wonderful the story really is?

How would we all react today if we heard that a baby who would 'save the world' had been born to a poor girl in a garage somewhere? Would we think it's just a story made up to sell newspapers or would we stop and think and find out more, or perhaps even jump in the car to go and have a look? I hope that we would be among those who would want go and see this tiny miracle for ourselves and that we would marvel and be amazed at what had happened.

I love this poem by Alan Titchmarsh – it describes how events might unfold if the Nativity happened right here, right now!

Wishing you all a very Happy and Blessed Christmas.

Liz

A New Nativity. by Alan Titchmarsh.

When all those long, long years ago
A child came down to earth below,
To save the likes of you and me
From evil, harm and misery.

Do you suppose that even then
There were some doubting, heedless men
Who, rather than believe the word
Just turned their backs and never heard?

You see, today we all recall
The baby in the ox's stall
The ass, the stables, shepherds, Kings,
All ancient, rural, rustic things.

But what if, here, this very night,
It happened...on the Isle of Wight.
Would we rejoice and all be merry?
Would we dash off and catch the ferry?

If Christ was born in Walthamstow,
Would builders drop their tools and go?
Would Wapping printers stop their presses?
Would supermodels ditch their dresses?

In Hampshire and in rural Kent,
Would shepherds, by an angel sent
Walk miles to see a newborn child,
Whose mother, unmarried, although mild,

Had given birth to a baby boy,
Not at the Dorchester or Savoy,
But in a garage, there's the rub,
Round the back of the local pub.

The boy's dad hadn't been to college,
And of the child he claims no knowledge;
Saying that an angel came
To tell his wife the baby's name.

Just a joiner; nothing grand,
No previous form, their records scanned,
The police confirmed when sent to see,
The saviour of humanity.

If Jesus Christ was born today
In newspapers instead of hay,
I doubt He'd even come to be
In *News at Ten's* 'and finally'.

For now it's hard to be impressed
With goodness, gentleness and blessed

With something more than mere sensation,
A baby, born to save a nation?

'Some tearaway; two homeless louts'
The newspaper proprietor shouts;
'Just print the story, headlines large:
Christmas Baby Born in Garage'

No shepherds, no kings, no golden parcel;
No prince from inside Windsor Castle
Following the star with brightest glow,
To the garage behind the pub in Walthamstow.

And yet I like to think that we,
Despite the e-mail and DVD,
Would know to go, when star shone bright,
And make that journey through the night.

To see the child who saves the world,
In some old oil drum safely curled;
The nativity for the millennium.
Would anyone out there like to come?

Circuit Arts and Crafts

Next year's Circuit Arts and Crafts event will not be the usual Festival but a 'Workshop' day.

This will take place on Saturday 10th March 2012 at Trinity Methodist Church, Felixstowe and will give people the opportunity to take part in workshops covering various crafts and hobbies.

Please book the date. More details to follow in the New Year.

Mission Area supper and concert

For those who attended the Mission Area Supper and concert at Trinity on 25th November a fun evening was had by all.

Following a supper of hot dogs, mince pies and ice cream we had a short quiz before sitting back to enjoy the concert where talents from across the Mission area were shown in the form of readings, poetry and sketches, singing and various musical instrumentals.

A big thank you to everyone involved in the organising, taking part, attending or contributing to the retiring collection which raised £175 for Whitechapel Mission.

Christmas Post Box

Don't forget the 'Seaton Road Christmas Card Post Box and Sorting Office'.

DATES: 4th, 11th and 18th December.

FOR: People to 'send' cards to ONLY THOSE WHO ATTEND OUR CHURCH



PLEASE: Include surnames of recipients on envelopes to avoid confusion.

DONATIONS: to JMA

Church Family Weekend 2013

Yes we are talking about 2013 and it is not a misprint!! We have now booked Belsey Bridge, Ditchingham for our church family weekend away in 2013 from 12th to 14th July 2013 so please put the dates in your forward planner.

East Anglia District – Year of Worship

Please book the date for the 'Year of Worship' event at Bramford Road Methodist Church, Ipswich on 21st April 2012. There will be an opportunity to look at worship in a number of different ways and take part in various workshops. See the poster and booking form on the church notice board.

DATES

Dec 3rd Saturday – Seaton Road's
Christmas Bazaar 2 – 4 pm.

Dec 3rd and 4th – Trimley's Crib Festival.
10 - 4 Sat. 12 – 4 Sunday

Dec 6th – Kids' Club party at Seaton
Road for Trinity and S/Rd's KCs 6pm

Dec 17th – Setting up for Café Worship and decorating the church
for Christmas 10am

Dec 18th – Christmas café Worship 9.45am (breakfast from
9.15am)

Dec 18th – Kirton Methodist Church carol singing 3.30pm

Dec 19th – Kirton Methodist Church carol singing 6.30pm

Dec 20th Tuesday – Carols by Candlelight service 7pm.

Dec 24th – Trimley Methodist Church – Carol Service 7 pm.

2012

February 8th Wednesday – Church Council 7.30pm

February 25th Saturday – Pudding taster evening 7pm

March 10th Saturday – Circuit Arts and Crafts Workshop day at
Trinity

April 9th - July 8th – David's Sabbatical.

For Mission Area Christmas dates see separate poster.



Daily Study Notes –

The Next Step of The Christmas Journey?

During Advent this year, with the help of the POSADA figures, we shall be looking at how the journey to Bethlehem changed the lives of Mary and Joseph for ever.



Advent and Christmas for us should also involve a life changing journey. Perhaps one way to keep journeying effectively, beyond Christmas is to start Daily Bible Reading and see where God guides you to on a daily basis.

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 for those finding reading difficult. If you would like to know more please have a word with me.

If you decide you would like to place a regular order (from January 2012) 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.

Enjoy your journey. I can recommend it!

Heather Bentley

P.S. Check out the Methodist e-version : A Word in Time
www.methodist.org.uk/bible

Posada

Posada is an old Mexican custom which celebrates the coming of Jesus and reminds us all that we should make room for Jesus this Christmas.

Modern Posada uses nativity figures of Mary, Joseph and the donkey who travel from place to place and are offered hospitality each night. As a Mission Area each church is having it for one week of Advent. Posada was launched by the visit of two Mexicans (aka Malcolm and Jonathan) to our service on the first Sunday of Advent (November 27th) at Seaton Road. During the week Mary, Joseph and the donkey have a busy week planned, visiting many of the activities taking place at church. There is a notebook for prayers, diary entries, photos etc accompanying the figures as well as a collecting box raising money for Methodist Homes. The Posada will be visiting Trimley, Trinity and Kirton for the following weeks of Advent and will be returning to Seaton Road on Christmas morning when there will be an additional figure in the party.

This is a very visual reminder for us all to make room for Jesus in our lives this Christmas.

Money Matters

In last month's money matters I summarised the financial report I gave to the church council. I covered the General Fund for the year ended August 31st last. This month I would like to bring you up to date with the various Restricted Funds.



The Hall Roof fund showed a deficit of ~£500 at year-end but we subsequently received our outstanding grants from circuit and district which leaves us in surplus by some £3000. The property scheme is now formally closed. The surplus will be held as a cushion against future property expenditure.

The Stairlift fund is accumulating fast due to Archie and Denise's efforts. We are currently waiting to hear from the Rank Trust. If our application is successful we should be in a position to go ahead. If we are turned down it will be necessary to apply for a landfill grant.

During the year we started raising money for our Parish Nurse and had £256 in the bank at year-end mostly from Daryl and Kathy's evening meal. The funding of Parish Nursing is covered elsewhere in Brightstar,

Malcolm

Carol Singing

Various carol singing opportunities are available this Christmas. Those known are:-

Friday 16th December with URC 6 – 8pm at Great Eastern Square

Saturday 17th December – Churches Together in Felixstowe at The Triangle 11am.

Sunday 18th December – Kirton Methodist Church sing around Kirton from 3.30pm

Monday 19th December – as Sunday but starting at 6.30pm.

Hope Trust

The last year has been a good one. Our new name and logo have enabled us to make excellent progress in establishing a position and identity within the community and we now have a sound base upon which to go on building. We have helped 78 individuals; the relief of loneliness is our major focus. We have used the media to help raise our profile with radio interviews, magazine and press coverage all being utilised alongside the placement of information cards in 26 locations across the town. We are actively networking with other organisations in the area to ensure the best use of mutual resources. We have appreciated opportunities to speak at local churches and interest groups - always happy to do more! Our valued work in Residential Homes continues, offering services and visiting individuals.

Please pray for Michael Allen, as he approaches retirement and for 'hope trust' as we restructure. Thank you for your prayer and practical support.

Paul Taylor

Pastoral Worker

BOOST

Recent Developments

- Boost HQ was officially opened on Saturday 8th October by Mayor Doreen Savage. There was a fantastic turnout of around 50 people and there was a good spread in the Evening Star too.
- Boost has launched a new website- www.boostfelixstowe.org.uk, which is the best place to go to for news, resources, and contact details.

Activities and Programmes

- Boost HQ has opened its doors for two main programmes
 - 'The Lounge' is the after school club which runs on a Tuesday and Friday between 3pm and 5pm. This has proved incredibly popular as young people return week after week and continue to bring friends along too.
 - Evening Cafes run on a Thursday and Friday evening between 7:30pm and 9pm. The young people who have come to these evening cafes have thoroughly enjoyed themselves, but as yet not many young people are aware that we are open in the evenings. We would like to encourage churches to display some flyers if at all possible.

- Boost has also been running a ‘youth worker’s lounge’, designed to bring together all the church based youth workers in the town’s churches. This has been successful and others have said it is a valuable time for networking and sharing about events and clubs. See the website for more info on this.

Challenges

- Boost is currently running at full capacity, and we are in urgent need of a few extra volunteers for both afternoon and evening clubs. If you think you can help, please contact Josh this week.

Finance

- The majority of Boost’s regular income is from churches donating a set amount each month. We are looking for at least 2 extra churches to help support us in this way. Please contact Alan Peats.

We would like to thank Churches Together, congregations, volunteers, and our supporters for helping us during our transition into Boost Headquarters. We are very excited about what is to come as we continue to open Boost HQ to young people in the town.

Competition... see if you can spot the deliberate mistake in this month’s Brightstar. If you find it let Robin or Mary know and you may be in line to win a small prize!
(Mistakes other than the one we know about do not count!)

Please note that all contributions for the February edition of Brightstar should be with Heather Farthing by
Saturday 28th January 2012. Thank you!

**Christmas Events
in the
Felixstowe Mission Area Churches**



Saturday 26th November

12noon Kirton - Christmas Bazaar
(Bacon Butties For Breakfast)

Saturday 3rd December

2-4pm Seaton Road - Christmas Bazaar
(Tea and Coffee)

10-4pm Trimley - Crib Festival
(Soup and Rolls 12-2pm)

Sunday 4th December

12-4pm Trimley - Crib Festival continues.
(Light refreshments available)

Saturday 10th December

10-12noon Trinity - Christmas Coffee Morning
6pm Trimley - Christmas Concert with Geraldine and Friends
(Scottish Theme – followed by tea)

Sunday 18th December

9.15 -10.45 am Seaton Road - Christmas Café Worship
(Breakfast from 9.15am)
11am Trinity - Carol Service led by Peter Crick

Tuesday 20th December

7pm Seaton Road - Family Carols By Candlelight Service
(Followed by drinks and mince pies)

Saturday 24th December

7pm Kirton –Carol Service
11.30 pm Trinity - Christmas Eve Communion

Sunday 25th December

9.45 am Mission Area - Christmas Day Family Celebration
at Seaton Road
10.30 am Trinity/URC Christmas Day Service (with URC)
At URC
(No service at Trinity, Trimley or Kirton today.)

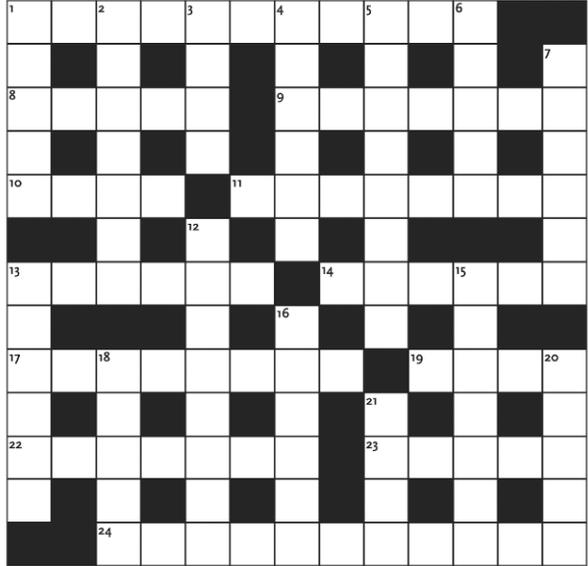


CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1. The day we celebrate, as seen by certain poor shepherds (5, 6)
- 8. To make oneself liable (5)
- 9. Message posted by Paul (7)
- 10. Possess (4)
- 11. Message often written on a Christmas present (4, 4)
- 13. Christmas songs (6)
- 14. — Lowly, — Holy (6)
- 17. A name of Jesus Christ (8)
- 19. The high point — approved by Wile E.Coyote (4)
- 22. Praise for another (7)
- 23. American Christian sect (5)
- 24. — — we bring for you and your king, We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! (4, 7)



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DOWN

- 1. To have — is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of the things we cannot see (5)
- 2. Get well (7)
- 3. Your chance (4)
- 4. Cry given to the person with the present (4, 2)
- 5. Post-Christmas festival (8)
- 6. Game (5)
- 7. Choose your present (6)
- 12. Praise be! (8)
- 13. Assistant priest (6)
- 15. A type of market or sale (7)
- 16. Not long ago (6)
- 18. Action (5)
- 20. Culture (5)
- 21. Waved by the fairy (4)



ANSWERS

ACROSS 1. First Nowell 8. Incur 9. Epistle 10. Have 11. With Love 13. Carols 14. Infant 17. Redeemer 19. Acme 22. Tribute 23. Amish 24. Gaid Tidings. **DOWN** 1. Faith 2. Recover 3. Turn 4. Open 11. 5. Epiphany 6. Lotto 7. Select 12. Alleluia 13. Curate 15. Auction 16. Recent 18. Doing 20. Ethos 21. Wand.

Churches Together in Felixstowe

Brief notes from the CTiF Forum Meeting held at Trinity Methodist Church on 8th November.

Rev David Kemble opened the meeting with a bible reading and prayer.

Margaret Condick, the Moderator, chaired the meeting.

Financial

As a one-off donation, we agreed to give £125 to each of four organisations: Boost, Hope Trust, Town Pastors and the Welcome Pack group.

This was as recommended by our Hon Treasurer, Gordon Cooper, as we have accumulated an unnecessary surplus.

Feedback

Praise on the Prom: this had had to be cancelled due to the stormy weather.

Forthcoming events

- Posters for the joint use of national advertising were distributed and offers of help were sought to find a place to display a 6ft by 4ft copy. *S/Rd's Leadership Team had already looked at this year's Christmas poster and had concerns about its content.*
- Carol singing on the Triangle, Saturday 17th December at 11am.
- Volunteer needed to organise Christmas Crib in an empty town window shop.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

- United service Sunday 22nd January 2012, 6.30pm at St John's Church.
- Week of Prayer 18th – 25th January.

Application by Quakers to join CTF

Jim Cadbury, the local Quaker clerk gave a presentation to the meeting . This was followed by an intense period of questions. At the time of the meeting 10 churches had voted in favour and 1 against. As not all churches had had the opportunity to discuss

this at their formal bodies the decision will be deferred until next year.

Felixstowe Listening Service

A presentation of this new venture, by Inspire, was given by Margaret Bale of the Salvation Army. It starts on 6th January at Felixstowe Library. *See the newsletter and leaflet on the church noticeboard for further details.*

Reports

- Walton Parish Nursing update, including appointment of Lorna Bellamy as the new parish Nurse, was given by Sue Hockenhill.
- Town Pastor update – Philippa Kichenside has been appointed the new co-ordinator.
- Boost and Hope Trust - printed updates were distributed (see elsewhere in Brightstar)

Communications

- Penny Cutler from URC volunteered to be the local press correspondent. Let her have details of events 4 – 6 weeks in advance.

Mary

Churches Together in Felixstowe

ANNUAL UNITED SERVICE

Sunday January 22nd 2012

St. John's Church, Felixstowe 6.30pm

(warm up singing from 6pm)

Speaker: Rev Paul Whittle (URC)

Paying for Parish Nursing

As a church we are committed to raising £1000 to support Walton Parish Nursing for each of the next 3 years. Obviously it costs a great deal more than that to pay for a Parish Nurse but in order to secure funds from District we had to agree to raise £1000. As Lorna, our new Parish Nurse is due to attend our worship on 11th December and meet the Seaton Road congregation; it seems a good time to outline plans for raising the money.

It is important that we have a mix of fundraising schemes so that everyone can join in and those who can only afford a little can still help our efforts. So I intend that we have a three pronged approach to raising the money.

Firstly, smartie tubes. At the service on 11th December we will be distributing smartie tubes. The idea is that people take them home, enjoy the contents and then fill the tubes with coins before returning them to the treasurer. We raised over £1,200 for *slates and ladders* with the boxes, so I am hoping that we can raise £150 each year with smartie tubes. A smartie tube full of 20p pieces is worth around £10.

Secondly events and other ventures. Daryl, Kathy and Sue have already started fundraising. We had a meal for Parish Nursing which raised £231 so I am confident that a range of events and other ventures will bring in £250 each year.

Lastly I plan to launch a share scheme. I hope to persuade a number of individuals within the church to buy one or two shares. Each share will require £4 a month paid by standing order or through the envelope scheme. This is equivalent to £48 a year. If we manage to sell 10 shares and claim tax relief on everyone's contribution then the share scheme will raise £600.

Add the three together and we have £1000. Job done!

Malcolm

District IT

I have recently received the following notice regarding an IT group for the East Anglia District of the Methodist Church. If you feel this is something you could do, or if you would like to know more about it, please speak to Mary as soon as possible because as you will see the deadline is 14th December.



Dear Friends

At the last superintendents' meeting we agreed that the time might be right to recreate a District IT Group and I undertook to try to co-ordinate its formation.

I have now got to it on the list!

The gifts and skills we thought we needed were a practical interest in IT systems - not only laptops, pcs and software, but also in projection, etc. We envisaged the group investigating the best method of providing/purchasing projection at Synods. We thought we should look at interest in some form of help in using social networking. There will be more.

The person skills needed include an ability to research, and to give clear explanations of ideas and concepts.

Could I now ask you and colleagues to identify any people in your circuit who might be willing and able to be part of such a group. If you would let me know names and contact details I will take it from there. It will also be helpful if you'd let me know if you've mentioned the group to anyone you suggest! Could we make a deadline of 14 December, please?

Many hopeful thanks

Barbara

FLOWER POWER !

We composed this little ditty
Which with you, we'd like to share
It concerns our Sunday worship
And the flowers put weekly there.

Their presence is much welcomed
We think you will agree
And for those too sick to join us
They bring joy especially.

We need to ask **two favours**
To help this practice thrive...
Please let us know if **you can't do**
The slot that we provide.



And **please** could you **advise us**
If as the service ends
You'd like to take your flowers back
For family or friends.

This info shared will help us
To plan and ensure too,
That all of those who need them
Get flowers and love from you.

We keep a note of where flowers go
Val plans our rota too
So let us know well in advance
What each intends to do.

If you would care to join us
And take a slot or two
Or give us a donation
We'd love to hear from you!

Thank you to everyone who already does flowers for Seaton Road.

Valerie Braden and Heather Bentley