

# THE MESSENGER

THE MAGAZINE OF PETERSFIELD AND LISS  
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

## THE HOLLY



## & THE IVY



PETERSFIELD AND LISS  
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

December 2024  
No. 734

## From the Minister ..

There are some years I struggle to know what to write in my Christmas message to you all. After all, the story remains the same, the characters are a constant, the message of love



come down amongst us at the heart of all we strive to do as a church and how we try to relate to one another... You'll have reflected countless times as I have on the unconventional birth of our saviour in a dirty, unhygienic, cold stable. This is a place in which nobody would expect to be meeting with the King of kings... and yet... it was here amongst the chaos and confusion that the shepherds (also highly unlikely candidates to be the first to greet him...) met the newborn Jesus shortly followed by the scholars from the east.

Recently I have spent a lot of time thinking through how and where each one of us encounters Jesus in our lives today. For some of us this will be in the stillness of a traditional church service in which we are surrounded by familiarity – hymns, liturgy, stillness. For others, we might encounter God most strongly in the beauty of creation – those mountaintop moments of awe and beauty. Some might meet with God in their interactions with others. I remember being a young person attending big, loud events as a member of what was in those days FURY (Fellowship of United Reformed Youth) and finding my faith strengthened by those contemporaries who also called themselves Christians. Growing up in a church in which I was one of the only young people was tricky and those moments enabled me to realise I wasn't walking my faith journey alone, there were others, and this helped me to find myself in the church family to which I belonged.

One of the strengths of this church family is that it is a very welcoming and warm place and good at engaging with those who might not be known to us. It is, what has often been described as a 'family church'. As with any family, there are things we disagree on – the style of music, how the church should be decorated, what constitutes as appropriate worship... When we put these things to one side though, we come to the heart of what is important, that love came down and dwelt among us showing us how to live our lives mirroring God. We all have family members we click with more than others, but that doesn't stop us being a family, similarly, we won't all agree on how we like to worship. What is important though, is that we keep giving all of those in our community, regardless of age, gender or anything else, opportunities to encounter God in a variety of styles and traditions.

Following several conversations over the last month or so I am committed to continuing to offer a variety of worship styles on a Sunday morning. We will be continuing with our traditional offering as there is huge value and importance to the familiarity. We will also be looking at different ways of worshipping together as a family, our children and young people are an important part of this family and as we gather around our Christmas meal with family members from all generations this season, it is important to gather around worship in such a way.

This Christmas, let us remember that familiar story of Christ's coming amongst us and maybe take a moment to reflect on how and where it is we have encountered the love of Jesus throughout our lives. I'm sure, it won't always have been in the times and ways we might have expected and maybe,

our intergenerational times of worship as well as our more traditional offerings can speak to you and inspire you in your own journey in 2025.

I wish you all a very happy and joyful Christmas and New Year.

Every blessing,

Your brother in Christ,

Josh.

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**OFFICE CLOSURE**

**The Church Office will be closed from Monday, 23rd December 2024, and reopens on Thursday, 2nd January 2025.**

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**Prayer for December 2024**

Father, the days are short; darkness deepens in December and this year it seems to reflect the darkness in so many parts of the world. We think especially of the land You came to, all those years ago, and other nearby lands where so many are suffering.

Father, thank you that Jesus came into the world as Your Light; that He shines today as brightly and powerfully as He did then, and will do forever.

Help us to open our hearts and minds to allow His light to fill us with the assurance that, no matter what is going on, we are safe in Him.

Thank you that, in Jesus, You have conquered death and darkness; that one day, everyone will bow before Jesus as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, whose Kingdom shall never end.

Help us, in thankfulness and love, to share Your Christmas Light and Hope and Joy. Hallelujah! In Jesus' name. Amen.

*By Daphne Kitching*

## Christmas Geese

The story is told of a farmer who didn't believe in Jesus. One snowy Christmas Eve, his wife was taking their children to a service at their local church. He refused to come saying: *'Why would God lower Himself to come to Earth as a man? That's ridiculous!'* So, they left him at home.

During the evening the winds grew stronger, and the snow turned to a blizzard. He heard a series of loud thumps on the window. In the field near his house he saw a flock of wild geese. They had been migrating south when they got caught in the snowstorm. They were lost and stranded on his farm, with no food or shelter.

The man wanted to help the geese and so he opened the doors of the barn, hoping they would go inside for shelter. But the geese didn't do anything, despite the man's efforts to move them. He made a breadcrumb trail leading to the barn and tried to shoo them toward the barn, but they only got more scared and scattered.

Nothing he did could get them to go into the barn: *'Why don't they follow me?!'* Then he realised: *'If only I were a goose and become one of them, then I could save them.'* Finally, he understood the heart of the Christmas message. God has become one of us in Jesus. The eternal creator God has entered time and space as a baby, to show us who God is and how we can know Him.

This Christmas let's celebrate again this amazing truth that we have a God who knows and can meet our needs in Jesus.

*'The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call Him Immanuel, which means 'God with us'.* Matthew 1:23.



## Message from our Church and Community Worker...

In early November I joined 34 other Children's workers in Oxford for a two day conference, with talks, workshops, and worship led by Jenny Mills- Ministry, Sam Richards-head of Children and Youth work for the URC, 2 synod children's support workers (Ruth White and Judy Harris) and Lorraine Webb URC Children's URC programme office. And Yvonne Morris joined us on Sunday from the diocese of Oxford.



The program had workshops on Storytelling, Intergeneration Ministry, Children Participation, Seasons of the Christian Calendar, Lego Church, plus Worship and Family Film night experience, to name a few. The core thing that came out of it from all Churches' Children's worker was we have a small number of children/families in church on Sundays.



How do we get the Church body to accept different types of worship from the traditional Sunday services, to having more intergenerational services to Café Church and even outside worship?

I don't have the answer, but I do know we are well on the way. Some Churches haven't got the Children and youth friendly church plaque/ certification; to show all are welcome, others have no children's work going on in the week or on Sunday. We are getting there, friends. We have the support of Wessex, and our synod worker Ruth White.

We do have inclusivity but if we want all who seek and find God to come to church, we do need to come out of our comfort zone and do more. Let's start with talking and sharing God's love with all we meet- old or young, big or small. We all have a story to share and God's love to give. Let's get uncomfortable and I don't mean bring back the pews.

So, as we prepare for Christmas let our love for baby Jesus be on our hearts, in our minds and show through all that we do. Let us remember Jesus as a refugee, a stranger in a foreign land, Lord, help us show your love to all wherever they are from, whatever they do, whatever the age. Help us to shine in the darkness.

## January

I never make New year's resolutions; I don't see the point. I never keep to them, and I don't want to feel bad after a lovely Christmas break.

People get themselves in a state especially at the beginning of the New year, I need to lost weight, I need to eat healthier, I need to do more exercise, I need and so on and so on..... I think the only thing we need to do, is rest in the Lord and listen to him. If you feel you need to get closer to God why not join us on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of the month for Friday Reflection at 10.30am.

We come into Church listen to some spiritual music and talk to God though our heart and minds in silence... leaving everything at the cross, lament, worries fears or thanks it's a time to get closer to God in silence. There are Bible verse to read to help you connect with God in a deeper way. This session last for 30mins. No one has to do anything, read anything or share anything, it's between you and God. But there will always be a tea or coffee afterward if you want to stay.

Love, health and happiness for you all in 2025 Jo x

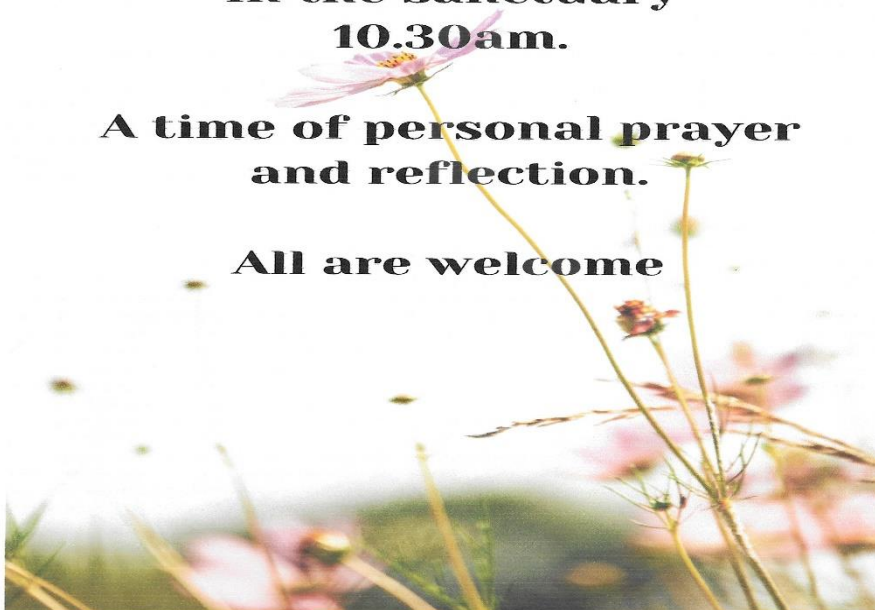
### **Friday reflection**

**Every 4th Friday of the  
month.**

**In the sanctuary  
10.30am.**

**A time of personal prayer  
and reflection.**

**All are welcome**





## BLESSING



**Rev David Bedford took the service themed on Blessing. This was the first part of the Aaronic blessing, displayed by members of the congregation.**



# Community Matters

PLEASE CONTACT YOUR NEAREST OFFICE  
TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT:

## Frontline Petersfield Debt Advice

c/o Life Church Centre  
16D Chapel Street,  
Petersfield,  
GU32 3DZ

Telephone:  
**07919 998442** (24hrs)

Email:  
petersfield@frontlinedebtadvice.org.uk

Website:  
www.frontlinepetersfield.org.uk

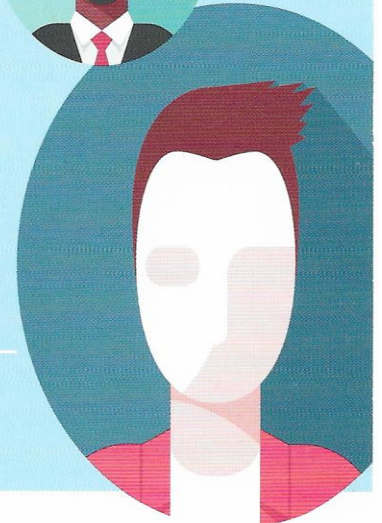


www.frontlinedebtadvice.org.uk

## FREE DEBT & BENEFIT ADVICE

Are you struggling  
with your finances?

You do not have  
to cope alone.



"After a  
horrendous time  
in my life I am  
now debt free!"

### Frontline Debt Advice (UK)

Registered Address: c/o Three Counties Church,  
Haslemere Locality Office, Lion Green, Haslemere,  
Surrey GU27 1LD

A Company Limited by Guarantee  
Registered in England No. 7136786

Registered Charity No. 1134908

Licensed by the FCA to provide Debt Adjusting & Counselling No. 694921

FRONTLINE® is the registered trade mark of  
Frontline Debt Advice (UK)



## Food Bank Updates



Our opening times are: -

**Stock and Donations: Mondays and**

**Wednesdays: 9.30 am – 11.30 am**

**Distribution: Tuesdays and Fridays:**

**9.30 am – 11.30 am**

**At Petersfield Methodist Church**

For more information please check our website: [Petersfield Food Bank \(pactfoodbank.org.uk\)](http://pactfoodbank.org.uk)



Open every Wednesday from 2pm till 3.30pm at St Mary's. You can meet us, enjoy a cuppa and take away your food bags. Delivery can be arranged for those on foot. Can't get to St. Mary's? Then a

Wednesday delivery can be arranged if a request is made by lunchtime on Monday. Ring 01730 00659/300921 or text 07570792525

The Liss Foodbank is for surrounding villages as well as Liss. It can be accessed for your short-term need without a referral.

Please continue to drop off donations in St. Mary's Rectory porch, 111 Station Road, or bring donations to St. Mary's on a Wednesday afternoon.

### Free Shop Petersfield

The Shop collects food from supermarkets, farms, community gardens and others, that would otherwise go to waste.

Anyone is welcome to come along and take what they need.

It is not part of the Food Bank; the goal is purely to keep good food out of landfill.

The Free Shop is located to the right of Petersfield Station Entrance.

**Opening times: Wednesday 1.30 pm – 3 pm**

**Friday & Saturday 10 am – 11.30 am**

For more information contact: [easthampshirerail.co.uk/freeshop-shop](http://easthampshirerail.co.uk/freeshop-shop)

Or call Lucy on **07988043870**

# PACT\* CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH

If you, or someone you know, will be spending Christmas Day alone, we warmly welcome all to join our PACT lunch celebrations.

Wednesday 25 December | 12:30 – 3:00pm  
Petersfield Community Centre,  
Love Lane, GU31 4BW

For more information or to RSVP  
(by Wednesday 11 December),  
please email  
[christmaslunch.pact@gmail.com](mailto:christmaslunch.pact@gmail.com)  
or call 07568 451 989.

Alternatively, please pop into  
Winton House, 18 High Street, Petersfield to  
collect a form.

Please note: transport to-and-from the  
lunch can be  
provided if required.



## Petersfield and Liss United Reformed Church

### Update on regular weekday activities

Please note the following updates.

- **Drop in Tea** – Drop-In Tea for December will be on the 10<sup>th</sup> and January will be on the 14<sup>th</sup>. This is an opportunity for anyone to come to the CFC for a chat and a cuppa and even some cake! Call in any time between 2 and 4pm. Come when you can - go when you must! We look forward to seeing you then.



Julie, Keith and Mary

### Rotas – December 2024/January 2025

Date	Duty Elders	AV
December 1	Anne Glenn	David Darling
December 8	Mary Fair	Keith Evans
December 15	Isaac Oru`	Jonathan Oru
December 22	Wendy Cassar & Mike P-H	Carolyn Barton
December 25		David Darling
December 29	Mike P-H	Roy Knight
January 5	TBC	David Darling
January 12	TBC	Keith Evans
January 19	TBC	Jonathan Oru
January 26	TBC	Carolyn Barton

### Welcomers' Rota December 2024/January 2025

Date	Welcomers
December 1	Anne Glenn
December 8	Di Lugger
December 15	Roy Knight
December 22	Isaac Oru
December 29	Elizabeth Phillips
January 5	Tim Abbott
January 12	Wendy Holdsworth
January 19	Robin Hart
January 26	Tony Phillips

- Please arrive 30mins before start of the service
- When all have arrived, count the adults and children, and enter the numbers on the notice board record sheet.
- Carry the offertory box to the Communion Table for the service.
- If your date is not suitable, please adjust with another person as a swap.

## Petersfield and Liss Church Calendar - December 2024

Please note Services are held at College Street, Petersfield.

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>Gift Service with Mary Fair</b>	
Monday	2	1 pm	Ladies' Bible Studies	Sanctuary
		4-5 pm	Forest Church	CFC
Tuesday	3	9.30 am	Little Fishes	CFC
		7.30 pm	Elders' Meeting	CFC
Thursday	5	10 am	Prayer Meeting	Sanctuary
		2.30 pm	Home Group	84 Moggs Mead
		7 pm	Home Group	Buckmore Farmhouse
		8 pm	Home Group	12 Geddes Way
Saturday	7	2-4 pm	Advent Walk	CFC
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>Liss Band</b>	
Monday	9	1 pm	Ladies' Bible Studies	Sanctuary
		4-5 pm	Forest Church	CFC
Tuesday	10	9.30 am	Little Fishes	CFC
		2- 4 pm	Drop-in Tea	CFC
		7.30 pm	Women's Fellowship	CFC
Thursday	12	10 am	Prayer Meeting	Sanctuary
Friday	13	10.30 am	Friday Fellowship	Sanctuary
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>Children's Church Service</b>	
Monday	16	4 – 5 pm	Forest Church	CFC
Tuesday	17	9.30 am	Little Fishes	CFC
		2pm	Connie's Handicraft Group	CFC
Thursday	19	10 am	Prayer Meeting	Sanctuary
		2.30pm	Home Group	84 Moggs Mead
		<b>7 pm</b>	<b>PACT Carols in the Square</b>	
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>Esme Kelly &amp; James Fells</b>	
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>10 am</b>	<b>Christmas Day Service</b>	
Thursday	26	10 am	Prayer Meeting	Sanctuary
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>Mary Fair</b>	

## Petersfield & Liss Church Calendar –January 2025

Thursday	2	10 am	Prayer Meeting	Sanctuary
		2.30 pm	Home Group	84 Moggs Mead
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>Rosemary Ward</b>	
Tuesday	7	7.30 pm	Elders' Meeting	CFC
Thursday	9	10 am	Prayer Meeting	Sanctuary
Friday	10	10.30 am	Friday Fellowship	Sanctuary
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>Minister</b>	
Monday	13	1 pm	Ladies' Bible Studies	Sanctuary
		4-5 pm	Forest Church	CFC
Tuesday	14	9.30 am	Little Fishes	CFC
		2-4 pm	Drop-in Tea	CFC
		7.30 pm	Women's Fellowship	CFC
Thursday	16	10 am	Prayer Meeting	Sanctuary
		2.30 pm	Home Group	84 Moggs Mead
		7 pm	Home Group	Buckmore Farmhouse
		8 pm	Home Group	12 Geddes Way
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>Minister</b>	
<b>3.30 pm</b>		<b>PACT Unity Service - Carolyn Barton</b>		
Monday	20	1 pm	Ladies' Bible Studies	Sanctuary
		4-5 pm	Forest Church	CFC
Tuesday	21	9.30 am	Little Fishes	CFC
		2 pm	Connie's Handicraft Group	CFC
Thursday	23	10 am	Prayer Meeting	Sanctuary
Friday	24	10.30 am	Friday Reflection	Sanctuary
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>Minister</b>	
Monday	27	1 pm	Ladies' Bible Studies	Sanctuary
Tuesday	28	9.30 am	Little Fishes	CFC

**Petersfield & Liss Church Calendar –January 2025 cont.**

Tuesday	28	7.30 pm	Church Meeting	CFC
Thursday	30	10 am	Prayer Meeting	Sanctuary
		7 pm	Home Group	Buckmore Farmhouse
		8 pm	Home Group	12 Geddes Way

**That coin in your Christmas pudding**

There is a tradition, which dates from the Middle Ages, of putting silver coins into Christmas puddings. The first coins used were a silver farthing or penny. After World War One, it became a threepenny bit and then a sixpence. Finding one was supposed to bring you good fortune, but probably it was more likely to break a tooth as you bit into the pudding.

We now pay for most things with plastic or by tapping a mobile telephone. In future, will people put old credit cards or phones in their Christmas pudding? Hope not.

Other coins 'appear' at this time of year. Chocolate coins are traditionally given to children at Christmas time, and in Jewish tradition during Hanukkah. It is said that one night Saint Nicholas climbed on a roof and threw a purse of money down a chimney, which landed in a pair of stockings that a little girl had hung up to dry. Good throw!



# Mission News

*For your information and prayers, there will be news from one or more Missions each month. If you support a mission that has any information and prayer updates, please send these to the editor so that they can be included*



UKRAINE  
CHRISTIAN  
PARTNERSHIP

## UKRAINE MISSION UPDATE

As we approach the end of 2024, it is a good time to summarise what Ukraine Christian Partnership (UCP) has been supporting this year:

- Through Pastor Sergey's church in Chornobaivka, Kherson, 125 needy villagers are provided with weekly top-up food parcels and essential medical supplies.
- Funding of Pastor Sergey's house rebuilding project, helping to make war-damaged homes of elderly or needy villagers liveable once more. For homes damaged beyond repair, pre-fabricated temporary houses, 'prefabs', funded by another charity are supplied. UCP provides funding for ground preparation work, clearing away rubble and making the bases/foundations for the prefabs. UCP has been funding this project since it started in Sep 2023. Three apartment blocks and 53 houses were made liveable once more, foundations for 35 prefabricated houses were completed, and emergency repairs were made to a further 20 houses which had been recently hit by missiles or shells.
- In the spring we provided 350 village families in Transcarpathia with vegetable seeds to enable them to grow more of their own food.
- Medical grants for three villagers in Transcarpathia who needed surgery and/or treatment which they could not afford, as well as

- incontinence pads for housebound elderly patients and medical equipment for the local doctor and medical centre.
- Support to help buy a minibus for Pastor Sergey's church (and fund repairs of the Gyula church minibus).
- Funding for four summer Bible camps for children in Transcarpathia.

Thank you for your continued generosity to UCP and a special thanks to Connie's Handicraft Group for a further £100. We would be unable to do all this work without you.

Apologies that the weblink last month did not go to the correct part of our website (somebody is in the process of updating the site). The following link now provides details of how donations can be made: [How Can You Help? | Ukraine Christian Partnership | UK Charity](#) (scroll right down). Alternatively, cash or cheques (payable to Ukraine Christian Partnership) may be handed to David Darling, Carol Tubbs or Jim Cleverly. All donations can be gift aided.

Thank you so much for your faithful support, whether that is in prayer or finances. Please continue to pray for peace and for all those affected by the war.

**David Darling, Ukraine Christian Partnership** [www.ukrainecp.org](http://www.ukrainecp.org))

Another house repair by Pastor Sergey's project and a very happy elderly resident (her slippers will now hopefully fulfil their message – 'Stay Cozy!')





## **DEC Middle East Humanitarian Appeal**

<https://www.dec.org.uk>

Over the past year, war in the Middle East has devastated millions of people's lives across the region, destroying their families, homes, schools, hospitals and businesses.

This Christmas, millions of people across Gaza, Lebanon and the wider region are in urgent need of food, shelter and medical care.

The DEC brings together 15 leading UK aid charities to raise funds quickly and efficiently at times of humanitarian crisis overseas. Its member charities are all leading aid charities and include: Action Against Hunger, Actionaid, Age International, British Red Cross, CAFOD, CARE, Christian Aid, Concern Worldwide, International Rescue Committee, OXFAM, Save the Children, TearFund, and World Vision.

### **How Tearfund is responding**

Tearfund is currently working with local churches and its partners across the Middle East.

It reports:

“In Gaza, our International Health Partners are providing life-saving medicine and desperately needed healthcare.

“In Lebanon, we are working through local churches to provide food, mattresses and other essentials to people forced from their homes by the fighting.

“In the West Bank, we are working with the Diocese of Jerusalem, who are providing healthcare and education to those affected.”

You can help by going to: <https://www.tearfund.org/campaigns/middle-east-emergency-appeal>

## No Room? On the Contrary

All over the world, doors are being slammed shut this Christmas. As the wars in the Middle East, in Ukraine and in Sudan rage on, millions are losing their homes and places of safety. Elsewhere, hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers and would-be immigrants are on the road, seeking refuge anywhere they can find it.

Meanwhile, in recent years vast numbers of Christians have been forced to flee from their ancient homelands in Syria and Iraq. They mirror the Holy Family's escape into Egypt. Every time yet another infant dies violently, it is a reminder of the first century massacre of babies in the Bethlehem region.

So perhaps this year, one carol will be sung with particular poignancy. It retells the message of angels, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favour rests" and continues:

*Yet with the woes of sin and strife,  
The world has suffered long;  
Beneath the angel strain have rolled,  
Two thousand years of wrong;  
And man, at war with man, hears not  
The love song which they bring:  
O hush the noise, you men of strife,  
And hear the angels sing.*

The angels' goodwill message will persist despite our clamour, for it proclaims God's all-embracing and eternal welcome. Whatever is happening on earth, Heaven's doors are ever open: it is home for everyone. The final biblical vision is of an all-encompassing city: "On no day will its gates ever be shut... the glory and honour of the nations will be brought into it."

Jesus, for whom there had been no room at the inn, taught that God's kingdom is home for every race: "I say to you that many will come from the East and the West, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." He reassured those anxious about the future: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms..."

No room in heaven? Don't you believe it!



## Recycling at Petersfield Infant School

We welcome the following items which help to raise valuable funds for our school

- used batteries
- used pens used stamps
- red, green or blue plastic milk bottle tops
- unwanted spectacles (without the cases)
- household cleaning wipes packaging
- tinted fabric conditioner bottles and caps
- dishwasher and laundry capsules or tablets plastic packaging
- plastic air freshener packaging,
- air fresheners and cartridges
- any brand of flexible plastic cheese pouches
- plastic nets from mini cheese packets
- any brand of individual plastic cheese wrappers
- any brand of sliced cheese protective plastic film

All of these items help raise much needed funds for our school with the exception of the used stamps which raise money for Canine Partners and the spectacles, which go towards the Lions Club of Petersfield 'Sight For Life' initiative

Simply drop your recycling at the Front Door on St Peters Road and we will do the rest!

**THANK YOU!**

# What a great poem by the late Spike Milligan about smiling



Smiling is infectious  
You catch it like the flu

When someone smiled at me today  
I started smiling too



I walked around the corner  
And someone saw me grin



When he smiled I realised  
I had passed it on to him

I thought about the smile  
And then realised its worth



A single smile like mine  
Could travel round the earth



So if you feel a smile begin  
Don't leave it undetected

Start an epidemic  
And get the world infected.



For our younger readers ...

# Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Luke chapter 2 verses 1-7

The Roman Empire charged the countries it had invaded taxes, based on the number of people and what they earned.

Emperor Augustus gave orders that all people in the Empire were to be registered so they could be taxed.

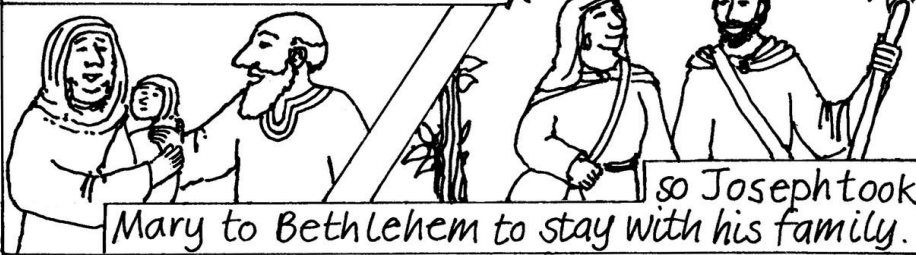


This census was before Quirinius became Governor of Syria \* (\* whose own census started riots - Acts 5:37)



When the order came, Mary and Joseph were living in Nazareth.

But Joseph was descended from King David, who had been born in Bethlehem...



so Joseph took Mary to Bethlehem to stay with his family.

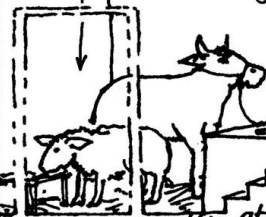


Come and meet everyone!

A normal home in Bethlehem.



stable with mangers



Animals were kept inside at night

Everyone lived and slept in the living room.

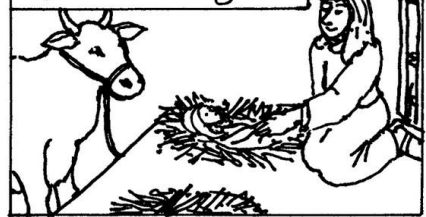
Room added for guests and visitors.

While they were staying there, Mary's baby was born.

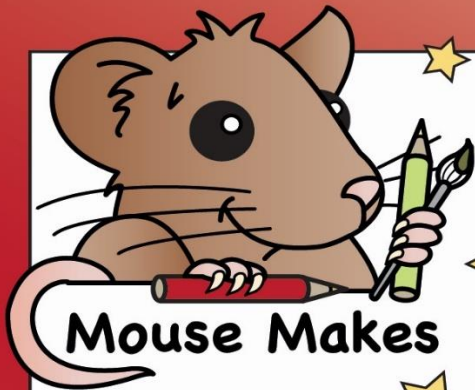


There was no space in the guest room to put a new baby!

So they made a snug bed for Jesus in one of the mangers.







### Mouse Makes

★ "Jesus said,  
I am the \_\_\_Y  
and the \_\_\_U\_\_\_  
and the \_\_\_I\_\_\_.  
No one comes to the Father  
except through me."  
*John 14:6*

"The child to be born  
will be called  
H\_\_\_, the  
\_\_\_ of \_\_\_"  
*Luke 1:35*

★ "For unto you is born  
this day a  
S\_\_\_  
who is  
\_\_\_R\_\_\_  
the \_\_\_R\_\_\_"  
*Luke 2:11*

### THE GREATEST GIFT

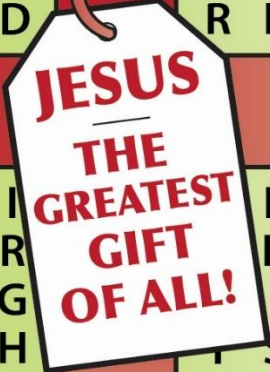
"She will bear a son,  
and shall call his name

\_\_\_  
for he will save his  
people from their sins."  
*Matthew 1:21*

"Jesus said,  
I am the

\_\_\_  
and the life."  
*John 11:25*

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



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

EMMANUEL • MESSIAH REDEEMER • KING OF KINGS • WORD  
SON OF MAN • EVERLASTING • SHEPHERD • PRIEST • PROPHET • TEACHER  
LIGHT • BREAD • VINE • DOOR • LAMB • COUNSELLOR • CHRISTMAS • GIFT

Find the words from the Bible verses too!

## Crossword

### Across

1 'The blind receive sight, the — walk'  
(Luke 7:22) (4)

3 Got (Philippians 3:12) (8)

8 Leave out (Jeremiah 26:2) (4)

9 Castigated for using dishonest scales  
(Hosea 12:7) (8)

11 Weighty (1 John 5:3) (10)

14 'Now the serpent was more — than  
any of the wild animals the Lord God  
had made' (Genesis 3:1) (6)

15 'Those controlled by the sinful  
nature cannot — God' (Romans 8:8) (6)

17 Because Israel lacked one of these, tools had to be sharpened by the  
Philistines (1 Samuel 13:19) (10)

20 In his vision of the two eagles and the vine, this is how Ezekiel described the  
latter (Ezekiel 17:8) (8)

21 Rite (anag.) (4)

22 Nine gigs (anag.) (8)

23 'The eye cannot say to the — , "I don't need you"' (1 Corinthians 12:21) (4)

### Down

1 'Flee for your lives! Don't — — , and don't stop anywhere in the plain!'  
(Genesis 19:17) (4,4)

2 Principal thoroughfare (Numbers 20:19) (4,4)

4 'The tax collector... beat his — and said, "God have mercy on me, a sinner"'  
(Luke 18:13) (6)

5 'The zeal of the Lord Almighty will — this' (2 Kings 19:31) (10)

6 'The day of the Lord is — for all nations' (Obadiah 15) (4)

7 Specified day (Acts 21:26) (4)

10 Deadly epidemic (Deuteronomy 32:24) (10)

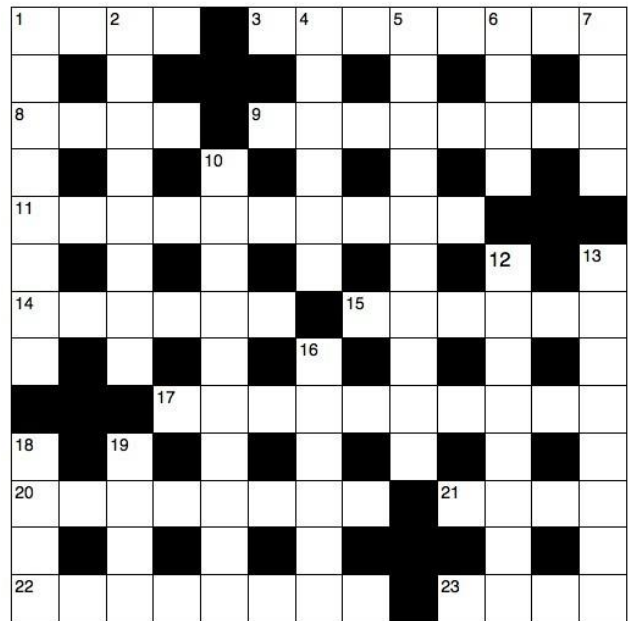
12 Roman Catholic church which has special ceremonial rights (8)

13 Tied up (2 Kings 7:10) (8)

16 In his speech to the Sanhedrin, Stephen described Moses as 'powerful in  
speech and — ' (Acts 7:22) (6)

18 'Although he did not remove the high places, — heart was fully committed to  
the Lord all his life' (1 Kings 15:14) (4)

19 Tribe (Deuteronomy 29:18) (4)



**Sudoku**

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

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Easy

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

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Medium

**Christmas gifts**

Grandfather was talking to his grand-daughter, "When I was a child all we got for Christmas was an apple and an orange." The little girl clapped her hands in joy. "Brilliant! I'd love a new computer and a mobile!"

**Christmas shopping**

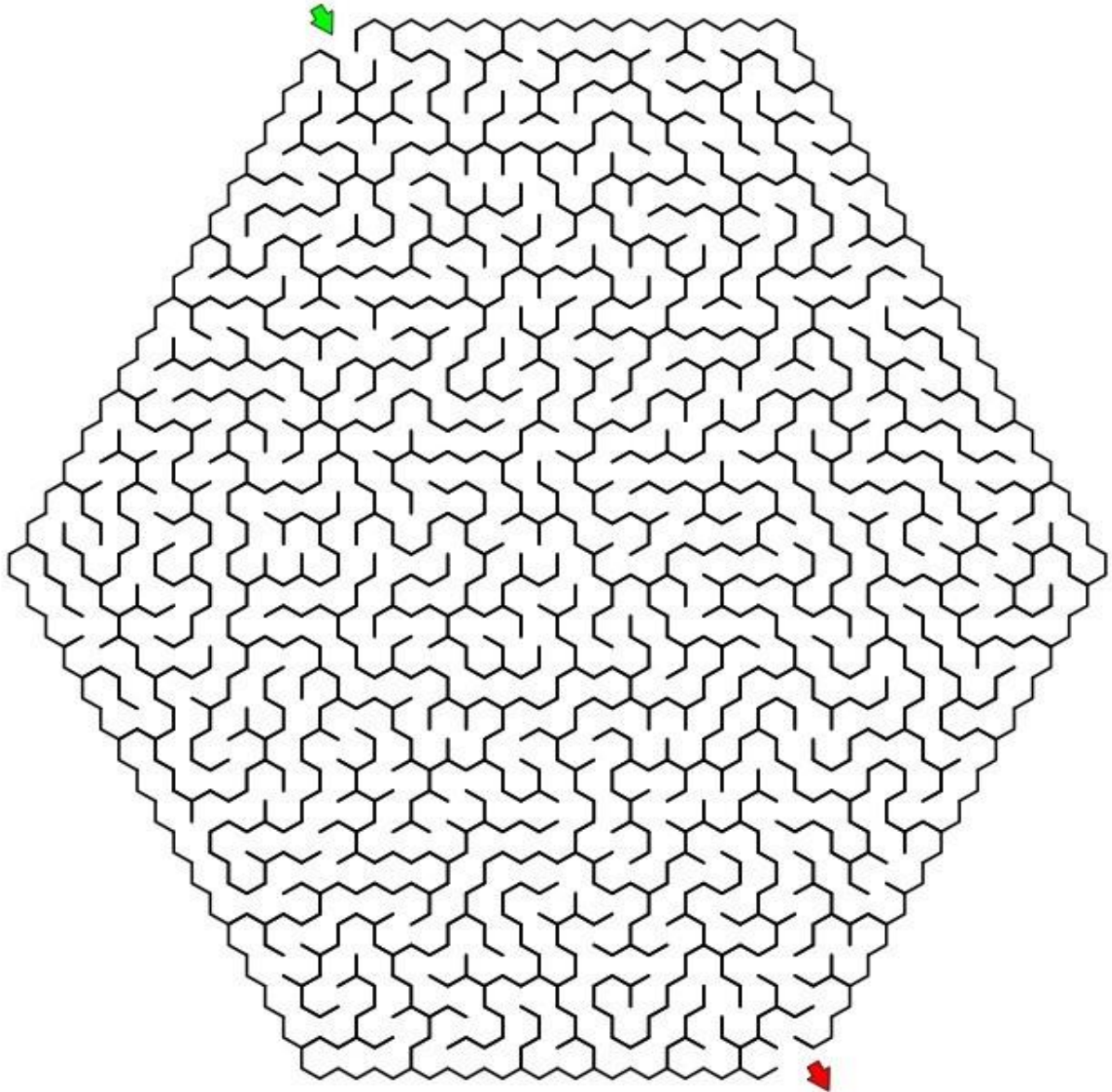
It was Christmas and the judge was in a benign mood as he asked the prisoner what he was charged with. "Doing my Christmas shopping early," replied the man.

"Why, that's no offence," said the judge. "How early were you doing it?"

"Before the store opened," replied the defendant.

**What do you get Dad?**

December is the month when the family begins to discuss what to get Dad for Christmas. Some argue for a shirt; others hold out for a pair of socks. But the argument usually ends in a tie.



## Christmas carols

One night as Christmas approached, some friends decided to go carol singing. A man answered the door of one house, and gasped as they launched into the opening lines of the first carol. Within half a minute, he looked stricken. Soon tears were welling up in his eyes. The carollers sang and sang, and the man looked very moved by what he heard. One caroller ventured: "I understand - our singing reminds you of your happy childhood Christmases."

The man looked at her with misery in his eyes. "No," he whispered back. "It's just that I am a musician!"

**News from the United Reformed Church  
items from the November edition of the Synod News**



**October Synod Meeting Minutes now available**

The October Synod Minutes are now available for you to read on the Synod website at link: [October 2024 Synod Minutes](#)

Direct link to open the Minutes as pdf: <https://www.urcwessex.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/S-2024-10-12-Minutes.pdf>

The 2025 meetings of Synod are:

- Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February (7-9pm online)
- Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> April (7-9pm online)
- Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> October (10.30-4.30 at Avenue St Andrew's, Southampton)

**Stepwise – Faith Filled Worship**

**An online group will be starting after Easter in 2025.**

For those who have completed the Faith Filled Life stream.

Please email [bookings@urcwessex.org.uk](mailto:bookings@urcwessex.org.uk) to find out more or to register an interest.

**URC Youth Assembly 2025**

**URC Youth Assembly, 7 – 9 March 2025.**

Details on the [poster](#). Wessex Synod will fund places and help with transport.

[Further information about Youth Assembly.](#)

Book your place by emailing [bookings@urcwessex.org.uk](mailto:bookings@urcwessex.org.uk)

**Wessex Synod Prayer Calendar December 2024**

December	1	Shanklin, Isle of Wight; Verwood
	8	Milton, Christ Church, Portsmouth; Peachcroft Christian Centre
	15	Christ Church, Woodley; Abbey United Reformed Church, Romsey
	22	Guernsey, St Saviour's; High Cross Church, Camberley
	29	The Moderator and Synod Staff; Trinity Church, Lower Earley, Reading

## Wessex Synod Prayer Calendar January 2025

January	5	Cumnor; East Cliff, Bournemouth
	12	Rowlands Castle; Aston Tirrold
	19	Fordingbridge as it closes
		Banbury URC @ The Haven; United Church Ferndown
	26	Beacon Hill, Hindhead; Bell Street United Church, Shaftesbury

### Eco prayer for January

Lord God

In our winter, help us remember our warming world

Be with those struggling to plant and harvest because rains have not come

Help those fighting wildfires because the earth is warmer

As we plan our planting

Help us to grow better in tune with your world

And help us to act in whatever way we can

For all things work for good through Jesus who loves us

Amen



### Solutions

ACROSS: 1, Lame. 3, Obtained. 8, Omit. 9, Merchant. 11, Burdensome. 14, Crafty. 15, Please. 17, Blacksmith. 20, Splendid. 21, Tier. 22, Singeing. 23, Hand.

DOWN: 1, Look back. 2, Main road. 4, Breast. 5, Accomplish. 6, Near. 7, Date. 10, Pestilence. 12, Basilica. 13, Tethered. 16, Action. 18, Asa's. 19, Clan.

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

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

## Lectionary Bible Readings for December 2024/January 2025



December 1	Jeremiah 33:14-16; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13; Luke 21:25-36
December 8	Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79; Philippians 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6
December 15	Zephaniah 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6; Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18
December 22	Micah 5:2-5a; Luke 1:46b-55 or Psalm 80:1-7; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45, (46-55)
December 29	1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26; Psalm 148; Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52
January 5	Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20 or Wisdom of Solomon 10:15-21; Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1:(1-9), 10-18
January 12	Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22
January 19	Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11
January 26	Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a Luke 4:14-21

### **Important - Sensitive issues**

**As the Messenger is included in the Church Website, it is important that all the content is suitable for public exposure. When composing an article, if there is anything at all that you consider should be removed before publishing on the website, please inform the editor, Carolyn Barton.**

**The articles contained in this magazine do not necessarily represent the views of Petersfield and Liss URC leadership.**

The deadline for the **February Messenger** is Sunday January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Please send articles to Messenger Editor, Carolyn Barton, tel 01730 265884 e-mail carolynbarton.barton6@gmail.com

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Minister	Rev Joshua Thomas Tel 07734 254983 <a href="mailto:minister@petersfieldurc.com">minister@petersfieldurc.com</a>	
Church Office	Church Centre Manager Mrs Esme Kelly Office Hours 9am-12noon Tuesdays to Fridays	
Church & Community Worker	Mrs Jo Hopkins 01730 266475 <a href="mailto:communityworker@petersfieldurc.com">communityworker@petersfieldurc.com</a>	
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Website	<a href="http://www.petersfieldurc.com"><u>www.petersfieldurc.com</u></a>	
E-mail	<a href="mailto:churchcentremanager@petersfieldurc.com">churchcentremanager@petersfieldurc.com</a>	
Sunday Services	Mornings at 10.30 am Services will be held at College Street	
Secretary	Mrs Carol Tubbs 39 Rotherbank Farm Lane Liss Forest GU33 7BJ Tel 01730 893489 Mobile 07766 412160.	
Treasurer	Mr Jim Cleverly, 4 Crundles, Petersfield GU31 4PJ Tel 01730 300558	

### ***Petersfield United Reformed Church Mission Statement***

*“As a congregation worshipping God: we seek to reach out with the love of Jesus; to worship God in our daily lives; to draw others into the knowledge and love of Christ; and to make disciples”*