

# Witney Congregational Church

# CORNERSTONE

December 2008  
& January 2009



*Our Church is, and will continue to be, a living, growing congregation where people of all ages will find God reflected in us: a beacon of God's love and grace to all.  
Led by the Holy Spirit, and through inspiring, meaningful worship, we seek to build relationships within our fellowship and the local community.  
Following the teachings of Jesus Christ we give ourselves in dedicated service to the wider community*

**4 Welch Way Witney Oxon OX28 6JF  
Tel 01993 709992**

**[www.witneycongregational.org.uk](http://www.witneycongregational.org.uk)  
[witneycongregational@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:witneycongregational@tiscali.co.uk)**

# WHAT'S ON GUIDE

Witney Congregational Church offer a whole range of activities through which we seek to Worship, Work and Witness to the Lord Jesus Christ in this community today.

Further information can be obtained from the Church Administrator, Minister, Church Secretary or the leaders of the particular activities who are listed at the back of this magazine.

## WORSHIP

Daily Worship	9.30 am	Mon-Fri	Short time of Prayer and Reading
	10.30 am	Saturday	Short time of Prayer and Reading
Noah's Ark Service	2.00 pm	Tuesday	For under 5's parents and carers
Saturday Praise	11.00am	1 <sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month	
Sunday Services	10.30 am		
	6.00 pm		There is a crèche facility at both services

Communion is normally held twice during the month at the first Sunday evening and third Sunday morning services

## PRAYER

The Church is open each morning for Prayer; also in the Garden Room on Sunday morning and evening prior to, and after, Worship - All welcome

## STUDY & FELLOWSHIP

Wednesday	7.30 pm	Church
Friday	10.00 am	Church

## YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Sunday	10.30 am	Crèche, Noah's Ark & The K.I.C.K. on Sundays
Monday	10.00 am	Noah's Ark - Infant Group for babies and pre-school children

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

	Monthly	Hi 5's
Tuesday	Monthly	Deacon's Meeting
	Bi-Monthly	Church Meeting
Thursday	10.00 am	Rest & Chat (Coffee/Tea available)
Saturday	10.30 am	Coffee Morning

## SUNDAY LINK

Weekly bulletin for all Christians providing stimulating thought along with news and notices concerning our Church

## WITNEY ECUMENICAL YOUTH TRUST (BASE 33)

4 Welch Way (Entrance - High Street) ☎ 01993 777870 Jude Levermore

## St ANDREW'S BOOKSHOP

☎ 01993 709429

Opening Hours: Monday - Saturday 09.00 am - 5.00 pm



As stated last month the shops already have their goods on offer, and I expect most of us are trying to plan this festive period. For some the decision has to be made as to whom we are going to spend Christmas with this year. And, even in this current economic crisis, we are all subjected to the increased commercial hype putting pressure on us to decide what ultimately we ought to buy. ***Amongst all this activity, and commercial hype, let us focus on Advent and the birth of Christ.***

The magazine this month, even though a double-edition, is not as large as previous years, but nonetheless the contents are once again varied, as alongside the 'Standard' features, the series on historic Christian sites in Britain - Whitby is concluded; article on SeeSaw; Marjorie Lee has submitted articles on Amnesty Card Campaign & Women's World Day of Prayer, and Joyce Kearsley has submitted an article 'Time for a chuckle', and Florence Smith asks 'Why must we ...', to name but a few.

Many thanks to those who have contributed to this edition, but would also encourage anyone to consider submitting articles for the next edition by either:

- Floppy Disk/CD
- E-mail:  
terrypowlesland@hotmail.com or  
jacquipowlesland@uwclub.net

- Or, if you haven't got a PC, just plainly written on paper which can be typed up

I now have a short break, as the next edition of the magazine is due out on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2009, so may I take this opportunity of wishing you, the reader, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

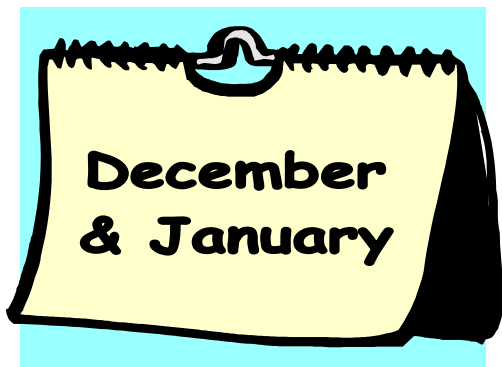
***Remember: God is for Eternal Life, not just for Christmas***

Your Editor



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**Daily Prayer Time:**

Mon-Fri 9.30 am Sat 10.30am

**Services** (10.30 am & 6.00pm unless advised)

**Dec**

6<sup>th</sup> am 11.00am Saturday Praise (Praise, Prayer & Reflection)  
 7<sup>th</sup> am Judi Holloway  
 pm Elaine Gudem Carol practise  
 14<sup>th</sup> am Karen Brusch Communion  
 pm Karen Brusch  
 21<sup>st</sup> am Judi Holloway All-Age Worship  
 pm Traditional Carols by Candlelight  
 23<sup>rd</sup> pm 6.00pm Noah's Ark Christmas Service  
 24<sup>th</sup> pm 11.15pm Midnight Service at High St Methodist  
 25<sup>th</sup> am Christmas All-Age Worship  
 28<sup>th</sup> am Judi Holloway All-Age Worship  
 pm No evening service  
 31<sup>st</sup> pm 11.30pm New Year's Eve Service High St Methodist

**Jan**

3<sup>rd</sup> am 11.00am Saturday Praise (Praise, Prayer & Reflection)  
 4<sup>th</sup> am Judi Holloway  
 pm Judi Holloway Communion  
 11<sup>th</sup> am tba  
 pm tba  
 18<sup>th</sup> am Karen Brusch Communion  
 pm CTiW United Service at St Mary's church, Witney  
 23<sup>rd</sup> pm 7.00pm Induction of Rev Jason Boyd  
 25<sup>th</sup> am Rev Jason Boyd  
 pm Rev Jason Boyd

**Feb**

1<sup>st</sup> am Rev Jason Boyd  
 pm Rev Jason Boyd Communion

The following events in December & January are given for your particular attention:

**Dec**

2<sup>nd</sup> Noah's Ark Service - 11<sup>th</sup> Birthday 2.00pm  
 Deacon's meeting  
 5<sup>th</sup> Hi5's Christmas Crafts  
 8<sup>th</sup> Noah's Ark Christmas Party  
 11<sup>th</sup> Rest & Chat Christmas Special 10.00am - 12 noon  
 13<sup>th</sup> Prayer Chain meeting 9.15am  
 Decorating Christmas tree

- 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday Dinners Christmas Dinner 1.00pm  
Meditation 7.30pm
- 19<sup>th</sup> Let's celebrate together and share music, fellowship, meditation and pins & needles 6.00pm
- 20<sup>th</sup> Prayer Breakfast at High St Methodist 8.00am  
CTiW Carol Singing (& bacon rolls) 10.00am - 12 noon outside Post Office
- Jan**
- 6<sup>th</sup> Deacons meeting
- 8<sup>th</sup> Fellowship Group 9 Pensclose
- 10<sup>th</sup> Prayer Chain meeting
- 18<sup>th</sup> Meditation
- 18<sup>th</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
- 27<sup>th</sup> Church meeting
- 29<sup>th</sup> World Day of Prayer study morning 10.00 for 10.30am  
Pins & Needles 7.30pm
- 30<sup>th</sup> Hi5's Beetle Drive

## ADVENT and CHRISTMAS WORDSEARCH

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

ADVENT  
JOSEPH  
MAGI  
PUDDING  
CHRISTINGLE  
SANTA CLAUS

CAKE  
CHRISTMAS  
BETHLEHEM

GOLD  
DECORATIONS  
SHEPHERD  
MESSIAH  
SNOW  
GABRIEL  
NAZARETH  
FRANKINCENSE  
HOLLY

SATURNALIA  
ICE  
MARY  
JERUSALEM  
MYRRH  
IVY  
NICOLAS  
FROST

## Deacons Letter

Dear family

During this season of Christmas and New Year we will probably do one of two things (or maybe both!) and that is to look back or to look forward. I heard a phrase recently, which at the time was not very complimentary to the person to which it referred. I was told that this person was living in "the history" instead of living in "the mystery". What a challenge to us all! Are you living in the past, recalling past hurts, past achievements, and perhaps holding a grudge against someone, or are you living in the mystery of what God is calling you into next?

Of course there is nothing wrong with looking back - remembering the times in our lives when we know that God was with us during that particular time. It is a good thing to remember. We remember Jesus each time we take communion. We know that God is with us ALL the time (Emmanuel - God with us) but sometimes we will look back and realise that at some particular time in our lives when perhaps we were at our lowest ebb or in a particularly difficult situation, it becomes obvious that God was with us during that time.

Some of you may have noticed that in Oxford they are keeping the word Christmas out of their celebrations and calling it "Winter Light". Why? The excuse is that they don't want to offend people of other faiths, and that they want to be "inclusive". However, if you read any of the newspaper articles you will find that it's the Muslims and those of other faiths who are saying

that they don't find it offensive and in fact they look forward to Christmas in England as its part of who we are - A time for peace and goodwill to all men.

"Keep Christ in Christmas" is a phrase that we would do well to remember because that is what it is all about. It is not about buying gifts, stuffing ourselves with rich food and sending Christmas cards. It's about a tiny baby who came down to earth to save us and to give us a hope for the future. So, as we look back upon the year and look forward to the New Year and all that it has in store for us, let us stop for a moment in the present. The ultimate Christmas present. Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour who gave His life for us.

Every blessing

Judi



The following article, written by Dr Herbert McGonigle, has been extracted from Church News Service, and is entitled

## **The Hopes and Fears of all the Years**

These words come from Phillip Brooks' familiar Christmas hymn, 'O little town of Bethlehem.' In four lines Brooks reminds us that in the birth of Jesus the salvation of the world was being played out in Bethlehem.

*In thy dark street shineth  
The everlasting Light  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
Are met in thee tonight.*

More and more these days people are asking if the Christmas story has any meaning and if it has any relevance. Some Christians even say that the New Testament doesn't tell us to celebrate Christmas so we should drop the whole event from the Church calendar.

The word 'Christmas' comes from the old Anglo-Saxon; from 'Christ' and from 'masse' meaning 'mass' or 'celebration.' So the word 'Christmas' means 'Christ's celebration,' and it was because Christians from the earliest times believed that Christ was God incarnate that his birth was celebrated.

Even though we can't be sure of the exact month of his birth, much less the exact day, yet his coming into the world was such a mighty event that the instinct to celebrate it is in harmony with the New Testament. Even the calendar reminds us of his coming, for we divide history into the time before his coming, BC, and the time since his coming, AD.

In three verses in Luke's Gospel, the meaning of Christmas is spelt out so simply and so vividly. Luke gives us the Christmas Message. 'Don't be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy... For all the people. There is born to you today a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord' (2:10,11).

Luke's words still thrill us with their timeless good news! We need only look at some of his key words and phrases. 'Don't be afraid ...I bring good news...great joy.. for all the people.' Nothing in our world this Christmas can compare with that! No need to be fearful! The news is good! There is great joy for all who will believe it!

And then he tells us what the good news is: a Saviour is born! He is Christ the Lord! But as well as this Christmas Message Luke has a Christmas Miracle for us: 'This will be the sign to you: You will find a baby.' God's answer to the needs of the world was to send a baby! People everywhere were looking for a deliverer, perhaps another Moses; for a king coming in the glory and splendour of a Solomon; for a potentate like Cyrus to bring peace to the nations; for a long-promised Messiah. And God sent a baby! A baby, yes, but this Baby was the Incarnate God!

And Luke has one more word, for to the Christmas Message and Miracle he adds the Christmas Mission. 'The Dayspring ...has visited us ..to give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet in the way of peace' (1:78, 79). The Dayspring is the gentle light of the rising sun. Christ our Lord came into our world silently and gently like the coming of the dawn, for had he come in all his ineffable glory and majesty we would have been blinded. And he came to bring the light of the love and mercy of God to us lost

sinner and to guide us in the way of peace. And all who believe this grand and glorious gospel will celebrate his Coming this Christmas!

Dr Herbert McGonigle is Senior Lecturer in Historical Theology, Church History and Wesley Studies in Nazarene Theological College, Manchester

### **Advance Notice - Base 33**

Raising money for Sierra Leone trip  
Easter 2009

21<sup>st</sup> February

A sponsored walk of 37 miles around  
the perimeter of the Wychwood  
Forest  
Watch this space

The following article has been extracted from Church News Service, and is entitled:

### **Fear not ....**

As the Northern Hemisphere days draw in, blinds come down earlier and earlier in the darkening afternoons. Lamps are switched on and fires burn in the grate. Collars are turned up, hats, coats and scarves are donned at the bite of the late-December weather outside. Our thoughts turn towards carols and tree decorations, mince-pies and present wrapping, children's Nativity plays and family togetherness.

That is - if we have grates to burn fires in, houses to keep out the cold, warm clothes to put on, food to prepare, money for presents, families to love and

be loved by. Thoughts turn towards celebrating the 'Season' in every corner of the globe. Happy Christmas, we love to say!

But the significance of the season is lost in the clang of cash-registers, the tinsel jangle of 'Jingle Bells' and 'I'm dreaming of a White Christmas' over endless Tannoy systems in countless stores worldwide. It is lost in crassness as people spill drunkenly out of bars in Father Christmas hats and into the streets and transport systems of our cities.

Why, as that unique stillness falls upon the earth on Christmas Eve, 'Do they not know it's Christmas?' (as Bob Geldof puts it.) It's not as if the date of Christmas Day has anything to do with the real date of Christ's birth. More like a pagan festival with Yule logs, consummate consumption and all that. Yet in spite of 'all of that', Christmas is Christmas whatever you believe and wherever you are. To the believer in Christ that unique stillness falls. It is as if the world holds its breath at what is about to happen. 'Emmanuel, God with us' is coming into our world, Credit Crunch and all. He's coming into the muck and mire of the stable, into the panic of the falling stock market, into sub-prime mortgage chaos, into home repossession, unemployment, bankrupt banks and horrible fear.

"Fear not," said the Angel of the Lord as the glory of the Lord flashed and shone all about the shepherds watching over their flocks by night. 'For behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all people. For to you is born this day in the town of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Messiah, the Lord.'  
Glory to God in the Highest!



## News around the world

The following information has been taken from CWM Website dated 28<sup>th</sup> November, so is up to date at the editing of this month's magazine

### **India: Orissa's broken church**

Since late August, the Christian community in Orissa has suffered attacks at the hands of Hindu extremists that have resulted in churches desecrated, thousands driven from their homes and many deaths.

Church leaders in North India have called for prayers for Christians who have come under attack in the Phulbani district of the country, after the death of a political figure.

Rev Dr Enos Pradhan, general secretary of the CWM-member Church of North India (CNI) said Christians from the region are being made scapegoats following the murder of 82-year-old VHP (Vishwa Hindu Parishad) leader Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati and five of his associates.

Local press reports accused Christian and Maoist militants of carrying out the killings. Pradhan has received reports that following the deaths, churches in the district are being burnt down, Presbyters beaten and the houses of Christian families attacked.

He has called on Home Minister Shri Shivraj Patil, and chief minister of Orissa Shri Naveen Patnaik, to provide immediate protection for the minority Christians in Phulbani district.

"Swami Laxminarayan and four of his associates were killed. We condemn the killing, but why should the innocent

Christians be penalised?" Rev Pradhan said. "As it is from December 2007 our people have been suffering with no food and shelter. We have not yet got over the pains and troubles in Jammu and Kashmir and now once again the Christians are targeted in Phulbani."

### **Bethlehem**

Religious leaders have re-launched a special Christmas appeal to get people emailing prayers of peace for people in Bethlehem.

The World Council of Churches (WCC) is inviting people to take part in the scheme, which has run for the last eight years, in a bid to give hope to those suffering under the conflict between Palestine and Israel at Christmas.

People's wishes and prayers will be printed out and then handed out to people in Bethlehem as personal messages, educational materials, or prayers in church.

In a statement urging people to take part the WCC said: "Sending a wish or a prayer by email is an important way of communicating with many people who long to hear a word of hope. People in Bethlehem greatly appreciate receiving wishes and prayers from people outside the region, both as personal and spiritual gestures of comfort and hope on the occasion of Christmas. These messages are one way of breaking through the isolation they live in."

You can email your own message of comfort before 25 Dec to: [aei@p-ol.com](mailto:aei@p-ol.com)

### **Taiwan: church leaders back democratic rally**

Around 10,000 people are expected to turn out in force in Taiwan for a mass rally in

support of former President Chen Shui-bian.

The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan has shown its support for the event which is being held in Taipei in protest at a police investigation surrounding the former democratic leader on charges of corruption.

It is hoped that Democratic Progressive Party chairwoman Tsai Ing-wen will attend the event entitled, "Taiwan, Our Country, Democracy, Human Rights and Justice", which has been organised by president of the Ketagalan Foundation, Lee Hung-hsi.

### **Zambia: Church leaders condemn riots**

Religious chiefs in Zambia have condemned riots in the Kitwe region that have left a trail of destruction.

Riots kicked off in the Kitwe region after station manager for Radio Incengelo, Fr Frank Bwalya was arrested following the broadcast of a post election programme.

Police have arrested 38 people after residents from the area staged mass demonstrations against the arrest of a local radio station manager.

United Church of Zambia (UCZ) presbytery Bishop Njase voiced his sadness over the riots and strongly condemned those that had played a part in damaging property.

The Council of Churches in Zambia has also condemned the unrest.

### **Bangladesh**

When it comes to reaching out to the community, missionary to Bangladesh James Pender has learnt that sometimes

its the little things that make the biggest difference.

For the past five years, he's served as a missionary with the Church of Bangladesh which has just 16,000 members - a tiny fraction of the 153 million population.

But although the church is small, that hasn't stopped it forging a strong niche in the community. In fact the church reaches out to more than 18,000 people through different schemes.

As well as holding awareness-raising talks about AIDS, human trafficking and womens' rights among other important issues, it provides small loans to give people a helping hand.

Nutrition classes are just one scheme run by the Church of Bangladesh Pender says: "The church is helping more people in the community than it has members and I think that says something. Its a fantastic example for churches in England and worldwide."

He adds: "The small loans can make a big difference to peoples' lives. They help people who can't go to the bank for a low sum of money to help them kick start a small business or buy school books for their children. They borrow at a low rate of interest, and a percentage of that goes into savings they can draw on later.

"I remember one woman came to us for a loan to buy welding equipment and we wondered what on earth she wanted it for. Later we found out she'd bought it to sell men in her village and she was making very good business from it!"

### **Creating a better future**

A large part of Pender's role within the church is to help out with developmental projects. He's currently involved in a scheme to get Santal ethnicity children

from the Rajshahi area speaking Bengali from a younger age.

"Santal children grow up in a village which is just Santal-speaking and they might not ever have spoken Bengali before," Pender says. "When they go to a bigger school lessons are taught in Bengali, many of them struggle and even drop out. We're working with the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) to get these children speaking Bengali sooner so they're more prepared for school."

As well as supporting people from the community through the church, Pender is also very aware of the environmental issues affecting Bangladesh.

Top of the agenda is climate change. Having read environmental studies at university, Pender knows how serious a threat rising sea levels are to Bangladesh, increasing the risk of more powerful cyclones, more drought in the north west and more flooding in the south.

The church is gradually trying to get communities more environmentally aware by encouraging them to do things like growing kitchen gardens. This way they learn to make use of the land in their own backyard in an eco-friendly way and increase their intake of vegetables. But a key environmental concern for the future is how drinking water is affected by climate change.

Pender says: "It's going to get to the stage where people can't drink their water because it's too salty. Rice supplies will also be affected. But on the other side, in the north west where I am based, we're getting more drought.

"I'm really glad that CWM has been raising awareness about the effects climate change can have on countries like Bangladesh."

### **Bringing life in all its fullness**

As the Church of Bangladesh steadily reaches out to the community through a range of different channels, Pender has noticed how God is making a difference in peoples' lives.

The Church of Bangladesh bases its vision on St John's Gospel in "bringing life in all its fullness". And the seeds planted are bearing fruit.

"When one person becomes a Christian it's not long before the rest of the community does," Pender says. "People get to see how Christianity has changed their families and they decide they want to become a part of it too."

He adds: "I sometimes ask people what the difference is now they are a Christian. One man I asked said: "Now when we are sick we go to the church and we are healed."

It's wonderful to see what is going on in some of the churches in Bangladesh and it's a great lesson to other churches across the globe."

### **South Africa churches fund**

#### **Zimbabwe food aid**

Church leaders in South Africa have set aside more than US\$50,000 from CWM to provide food aid for people in Zimbabwe.

The United Congregational Church of Southern Africa and the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa have arranged for maize, cooking oil, salt and fuel to be distributed through its churches.

The aid has been provided as a result of concerns raised at the Zimbabwe steering group meeting where food security was singled out as one of the most pressing priorities for action.





## PRAYER LETTER No 128

### Love came down at Christmas

'For unto us a son born, unto us a son is given' Isaiah 9:6  
'For God so loved the world that he **gave** his only son' John 3:16

The Christmas story is so familiar, and so relevant today.

God **gave** His Son to the world. The wise men gave time and huge effort in their long journey to **give humbly** gifts that were valuable, precious and symbolic.

Do we give to God our time and effort? Do we give to others what is valuable and precious?

How do we give our gifts? What is our attitude?

The shepherds **received** the news of Christ's birth with amazement, haste and joy. After seeing the newborn Christ child they shared the news and joy of the Messiah's birth with those around them. We are just as excited to share news of a new baby born to a family member or a friend. Can we be excited about sharing our Christian faith? How do we in this materialistic and Godless society share the Christmas story? Let us endeavor in whatever way we can to put the real meaning back into Christmas, the festival of Christ's birth on earth.

Jesus was born to a homeless couple who later became refugees fleeing for their lives. Today in many parts of the world there are people who are homeless and thousands who are refugees due to war or famine or persecution. How do we react to the homeless or the refugee, are we concerned, what can we do to help?

The shepherds **received** the news and acted immediately.

The wise men **received** the news (saw the star and made the long journey) and with determination sought out the 'new born king'

How do we receive the news and what action can we take?

### Love came down at Christmas

May we continue to **receive God's love**.

May we continue to **share God's love**

May we continue to **give God's love**

Not just this Christmas but throughout the New Year

God be with you all  
Beryl

*Please note that for up-to-date prayer requests contact Beryl Cartwright (703717)*

The following short story written by Carol Ann Garretson is entitled:

## The Elf Who Ate Too Much

There was once an elf named Frez that would get so nervous at Christmas time he would eat two lunches at the elf cafeteria. He was trying to be just too perfect in making his toys and never thought they were good enough for the children.

The dolls' eyes never seemed to sparkle enough, thought Frez, and the wagons were not as shiny as last year. Nothing seemed to be going well and the time for delivery of the presents as getting closer.

No one understood why Frez was getting so particular and asking for a size larger elf suit. Then, one day Santa discovered what the problem was and began to solve it. It seemed that Frez was not a young elf, but elves never looked their age, because they were so cheerful and happy. Frez needed to feel he was special, so Santa gave him his own project called "special toys." These were all the toys that were broken and needed repairs and love. Frez was so glad to be in charge of such a project that he ate only one lunch that day to hurry back to his tasks.

We can learn from what Santa did for Frez about ourselves. Sometimes we have off days when we are just not feeling quite positive. Someone's smile or asking us to join some friends can make our whole day worthwhile.

Frez is content now with restoring the broken toys to new, and he does not have to eat so much because he is happy. He even wears his

old suit now, and his new suit is taken in for his smaller waist.

Let us try to do something worthwhile everyday so a "Frez Attack" will never get us. We all have special talents and we can help someone out that we see feeling down. It takes only a few moments to be able to know why someone is not feeling happy. Take that time from your usual day and listen.

Most importantly, we are here to help each other and all of us have that special talent to do it. Use yours today.



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

December answers

Norman's & Karen's Address

16/5 Blacket Ave  
Edinburgh  
EH9 1RS

The following article has been extracted from Church News Service, and is the conclusion of the 4-part series, entitled:

## **PILGRIM PLACES: Historic Christian Sites in Britain: WHITBY - Part Four**

When King Oswy decided that the question of the date of Easter must be settled once and for all, he called a Synod of both Celtic and Roman Christians. The meeting place was Whitby Abbey where Hilda was the greatly esteemed Abbess.

The two parties arrived to take part in the Synod. Colman, bishop of Lindisfarne, led the Celtic monks, supported by Irish and Scottish monks and Hilda. The Roman deputation was led by Agilbert, bishop of Dorchester, Wilfrid, abbot of Ripon, and James the Deacon. King Oswy presided and none attending that gathering in Whitby could have foreseen the long-term outcome of the proceedings.

Colman argued that the Celtic tradition went back through Columba, who brought the gospel to Iona, Polycarp, bishop and martyr in the 2nd century, and the Apostle John. Wilfrid, the Roman spokesman, said their tradition was now accepted by Christians all over Europe and that it could be traced back to the teaching of both Peter and Paul.

Argument and counter argument followed. Colman and his supporters emphasised that John was the Lord's beloved disciple and that his teaching therefore carried great weight.

Wilfrid, an ambitious young cleric, suggested that the Celtic Church was confused in its calculations and that

it was time for the obstinate Irish and Scottish monks to forsake their out-of-date practices and join 'the universal Church.' He then added very pointedly that Peter had the keys to heaven and it was unwise to ignore his tradition.

This alarmed King Oswy who asked Colman if our Lord had indeed given the keys of heaven to Peter. Colman said yes because it was recorded in Matthew's gospel. That decided the matter for King Oswy. Without asking what the 'keys of heaven' meant, Oswy declared that he and his people would follow St Peter and the Roman tradition. He would not offend the apostle who controlled the gates of heaven!

The die was cast! A momentous decision had been made at the Synod of Whitby. King Oswy committed himself and his country to the Roman tradition. Hilda accepted the decision but Colman resigned as Bishop of Lindisfarne and with many of his monks returned to Iona.

Of course the Celtic Church did not disappear immediately but after Whitby, the Roman Church in Britain was in the ascendancy. Celtic Christianity remained in these islands for another three centuries but was eventually incorporated with the more powerful and prestigious Roman administration.

The Synod of Whitby committed the British Church to the jurisdiction of Rome and the Pope. That jurisdiction lasted for eight hundred years until it was challenged and dismantled by the Reformation.



The following article has been submitted by Marjorie Lee, and is entitled:

## Amnesty Card Campaign

There are many prisoners in the world, isolated from family and friends, not knowing what tomorrow will bring to them. Just to receive a card of hope and encouragement would help lift their loneliness and fear, knowing they are not forgotten.

In the Church foyer there is a board listing names, and giving a brief situation, of each person. It would be good if you would select one or two people to send a greeting of goodwill to them. See what cases appeal to you, and checking on postal rates, remove the leaflet, taking the details home with you. The campaign continues to the end of January.

Amnesty often have feedback which is shown on: [www.amnesty.org.uk/gcc](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/gcc)

The message of Christmas is 'Peace'. As we post our cards off, may we ask a blessing on those receiving them from the God and Father of us all



Bradwell Village Fellowship  
**Annual  
Carol Service**




Thursday 11th December  
7:30 pm  
Bradwell Village Hall

*Retiring collection for ASBATH  
(Association for Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus)*

*Seasonal refreshments*

For further information, please phone  
Robert McBride 01993 822844

**Rumours of Angels**



by  
Graham Kendrick

*Presented by Witney Inter-Church Singers*

*Saturday, 13 December 2008, 7.30 pm*

*High Street Methodist Church, Witney*

Adults: £5.00/Concessions: £3.00  
Tickets available from St Andrew's Bookshop, Witney  
or tel. 01993-771452  
[www.witneyinterchurchsingers.org.uk](http://www.witneyinterchurchsingers.org.uk)

The following poem has been submitted by Florence Smith, and is entitled:

### Why must .....

Why must we go to school today? said  
Simon to his mum  
I'd rather play with all my toys then lie  
down in the sun

We have a life that we must live and  
rules we have to live by  
School will form a basic ground for  
eager souls to question why?

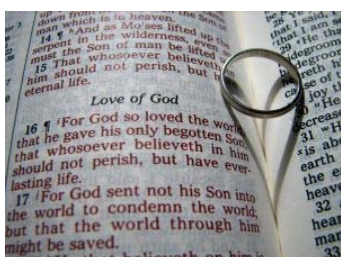
Why must I go to work today? said  
Harry to his mum  
I've finished school and need more time  
to have a little fun

We work to pay for food and shelter to  
keep our families safe and warm  
We give them individual love and hope  
they will be free from harm

Why must I go to church today? said  
Andy to his mum  
I get so bored with all that talk and  
feel so tired and glum

We go to church to thank our God and  
praise him for eternal love  
That we may see, and hear and sing his  
blessings shared with heaven above

So give yourself complete to God with  
assurance which feels good  
We receive so many privileges that  
giving thanks is what we should



The following article has been submitted by Marjorie Lee, and is entitled:

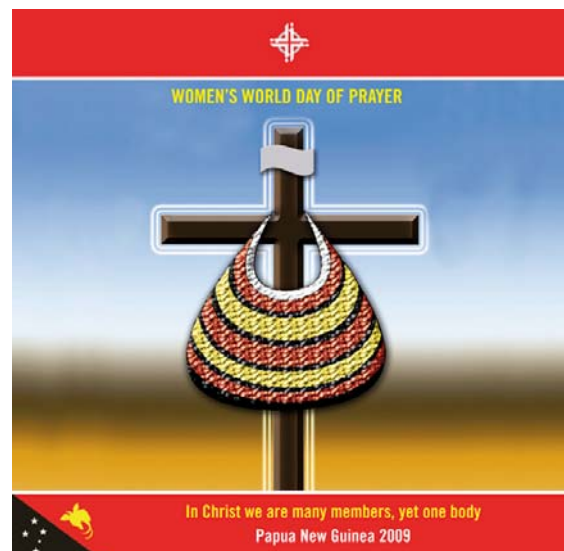
### The Women's World Day of Prayer 2009

The annual service of worship is being held on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March at Our Lady & St Hugh Catholic Church. Posters giving the times and the speakers will be available at the end of January. Meanwhile, book that date in your diary

It is the Christian women of Papua New Guinea who have framed the service with the theme, 'In Christ there are many members yet one body'.

To help us understand a little of the background, a study morning has been arranged on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January at St Mary's, Church Green. This will begin at 10.30am with Mr Clithero leading, with refreshments being served from 10.00am.

These preparation times are good, so please do come along and enjoy the fellowship of our neighbouring church people







SeeSaw - is one of the church tithes and the following has been extracted from the Annual Review

## SeeSaw's Plans for 2008-09

2008-2009 is a year for consolidating SeeSaw's service. Demand for our service continues to grow steadily as SeeSaw's reputation spreads and we focus on areas of the county previously under-represented. Referrals of complex cases are increasing. In addition, listening to children and their families' needs has told us that they would value more opportunities to meet one another, and we hope to build this into our service through our new 'Side by Side' Initiative. Our aim is to continue to respond to needs without making significant changes to the type of support we offer or to whom we offer it.



We've had partial success in replacing secure funding for our service. We aim now to build on our successes to ensure the continued strength, dependability and financial viability of the service. Our key aims are listed below, together with our strategies for meeting them.

**Aim 1: to provide a high-quality support service for bereaved children in Oxfordshire. To achieve this through:**

- ensuring that we employ specialist, experienced staff who can assess families' needs thoroughly and quickly and who can provide consultation and training to adults in contact with bereaved children;
- continuing to provide our highly valued Pre-Bereavement service to families where a death is anticipated, seeking funding to ensure its continuation;
- continuing to train and supervise volunteers to provide direct support to children and young people.

**Aim 2: to continue to improve our service.** Through our 'Side by Side' initiative we will respond to the need for more opportunities for bereaved families to meet each other. We will recruit and train new volunteers to support this aspect of our service. We will seek to raise specific funds to expand these opportunities.

**Aim 3: to expand our reach within Oxfordshire** – by promoting the service in less well covered parts of the county, with outreach by our Schools and Families Support Worker.

**Aim 4: to improve further our fundraising capability** – by maintaining the diversity of our funding sources. This includes continuing our focus on grants and trusts, building our base of corporate donors, strengthening relationships with supporters and recruiting new fundraising volunteers and supporting community fundraising initiatives.

**Aim 5: to increase our efficiency** – through maximizing the use of volunteer time for our administrative work and improving the efficiency of our communication with supporters using new technology.



The following poem, author unknown, has been submitted by Maureen Miles, and is entitled:

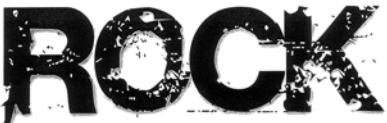
## Christmas

I have a list of folks I know, all written  
in a book  
And every year when Christmas comes,  
I go and take a look  
That is when I realise that these names  
are a part  
Not of the book, but they're written in  
my heart  
For each name stands for someone who  
has crossed my path at sometime  
And in that meeting they've become the  
rhythm in each rhyme  
And while you may not be aware of any  
special 'link'  
Just meeting you has changed my life a  
lot more than you think

For, once I've met somebody, the years  
cannot erase  
The memory of a pleasant word or a  
friendly face  
So never, never think, my Christmas  
cards are just a mere routine  
Of names upon a Christmas list  
forgotten in between

For when I send a Christmas card that  
is addressed to you  
It's because you are on the list of folks  
I'm indebted to  
For I am but the total of the many folks  
I've met  
And you happen to be one of those I  
prefer not to forget  
And whether I've known you for many  
years or few  
In some way you have had a part in  
shaping things I do

And every year when Christmas comes,,  
I realise anew,  
The best gifts life can offer is meeting  
folks like you  
And in the Spirit of Christmas, that  
forever endures  
Shares it's richest blessings in the  
hearts of you and yours



**ROCK**  
The Story of Simon Peter

This is the 21<sup>st</sup> musical by composer Roger Jones,  
and will be coming to Witney in March 2009  
as part of the national tour,  
supported locally by Witney Inter-Church Singers

**Roger Jones**  
will be visiting Witney to lead a  
**"Rock Taster Evening"**  
on Saturday, 6 December 2008, 7.00 pm  
at Welcome Evangelical Church

*If you would like to join the backing choir  
- or just find out more about the event -  
please come along to the Taster Evening*

CDs and scores will be available for purchase

Rehearsals will commence on Wednesday, 7 January 2009

[www.witneyinterchurchsingers.org.uk](http://www.witneyinterchurchsingers.org.uk)

## Are you missing out?

About £4.6 billion in benefits goes unclaimed by older people every year. The Age Concern website has a handy calculator to help you work out whether you are missing out. Visit [www.ageconcern.org.uk](http://www.ageconcern.org.uk) and follow the links from the home page



- Dec** 04 Charlotte Hayes  
 06 Sue Birdseye  
 09 Marie St Clair  
 12 David Pearson  
 27 Florence Smith
- Jan** 02 Margaret Esapa  
 Benjamin Esapa  
 Joseph Esapa  
 Gwen Mee  
 04 Tori St Clair  
 07 Brian Bennett  
 10 Cheryl Birdseye  
 12 Iris Lindsay  
 18 Kay Nicoll

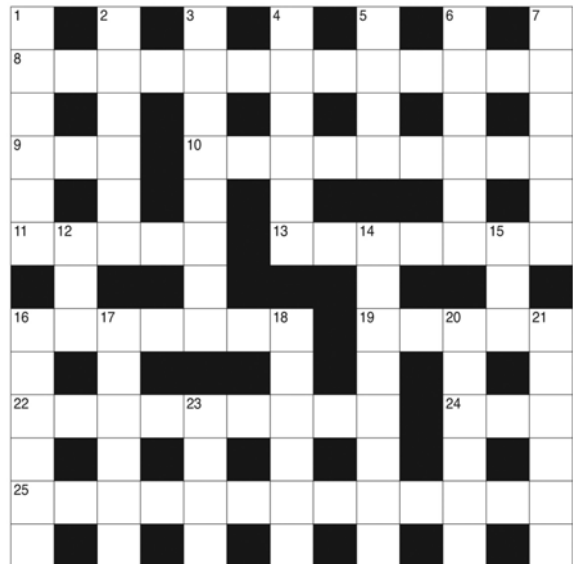
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				S	P	I	N			H	E	A	V	E

November answers

**Thank You**

A big thank you to Florence Smith and all those who helped run the recent Table Top sale on 8<sup>th</sup> November, and also for those who bought item(s). The event raised a massive £250.00 for the church

A big thank you for all the cards and get-well wishes you sent me when I was ill  
 Sharon Watson



**Across**

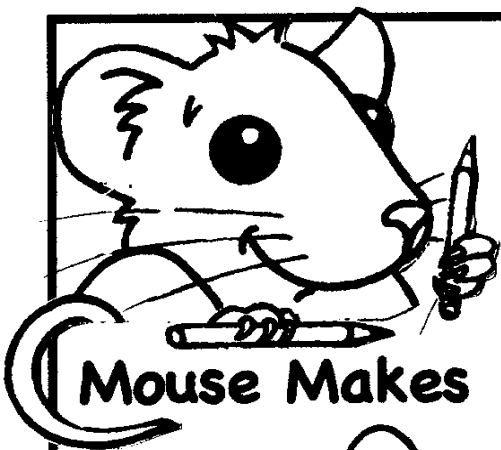
8 'Then Aaron and his sons and - - will be consecrated' (Ex 29:21) (5,8); 9 'He lifted me out of the slimy - , out of the mud and mire' (Ps 40:2) (3); 10 Such a person should be put to death (Lev20:27) (9); 11 Chain of mountains (Num 27:12) (5); 13 'They are worse off at the - - they were at the beginning' (2 Peter 2:20) (3,4); 16 Descent (anag.) (7); 19 'But they all alike - to make excuses' (Luke 14:18) (5); 22 Reimbursement (Luke 6:34) (9); 24 Female sheep (2 Sam 12:4) (3); 25 ' - - is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain' (Ps 139:6) (4,9)

**Down**

1 Alcohol-induced oblivion (Ps 78:65) (6); 2 'Three times I was - with rods' (2 Cor11:25) (6); 3 Future outlook (Prov 10:28) (8); 4 It caused Joseph's brothers to journey to Egypt to buy grain (Gen 42:5) (6); 5 See 15 Down; 6 'You care for the land and water it; you - it abundantly' (Ps 65:9) (6); 7 Son of Mehir and descendant of Judah (1 Chron 4:11) (6); 12 Car (anag.) (3); 14 Engage in warfare (Is 31:4) (2,6); 15 'In the thirty-first year of - king of Judah, - became king of Israel' (1 Kings 16:23) (3,4); 16 Excessive strain or tension (Jer 19:9) (6); 17 'The Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not - him' (Luke 12:40) (6); 18 'Very rarely will anyone - - a righteous man' (Rom 5:7) (3,3); 20 Avaricious (1 Peter 5:2) (6); 21 'Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is - ' (Luke 10:41-42) (6); 23 'For my - is easy and my burden is light' (Matt 11:30) (4)



At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Jesus... and it all started with a message from an angel. The angel **Gabriel** came to **Mary** with a message from God that she would be having a very special baby boy and his name was to be **Jesus**, which means 'the Lord saves'.



## Mouse Makes

The night Jesus was born a great number of angels appeared to the shepherds. They sang praises to God because Jesus, our Saviour, had been born!

*Read about the angel's visit to Mary and the shepherds in Luke chapters 1 and 2*

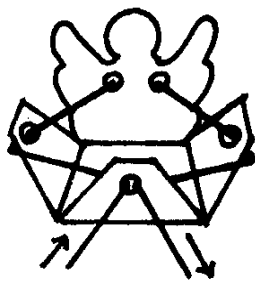
- Make this angel box to hang from the Christmas tree.
- Glue onto thin card then carefully cut



- around the outside.
- Fold back the sides along the dotted lines.

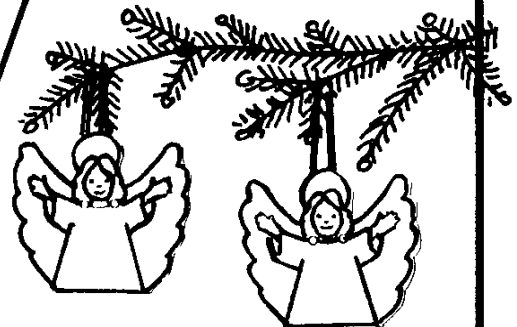


- Punch out the holes then cut 30cm of wool or thin ribbon and thread through the holes.



- Pull together and knot to form a box. Hide small sweets inside.

**HAPPY CHRISTMAS!**



- Photocopy this page onto card to make lots of angels!

# ROTAS

## DEACON & STEWARDS

Nov	30	Pat & Ben Smith
Dec	07	Nanna Blackman & Iris Lindsay
	14	Susan Wass & Theo Howells
	21	Pip & Beryl Cartwright
	28	Robert & Jill McBride
Jan	04	Pat & Ben Smith
	11	Nanna Blackman & Val Obriain
	18	Susan Wass & Joan Currie
	25	Pip & Beryl Cartwright
Feb	01	Robert & Jill McBride



## COMMUNION

Dec	14 am	Pat Smith & Nanna Blackman
		Elaine Gudem & Peter Gamston
		Preparation Rita Hayes
Jan	04 pm	Jacqui Powlesland
		Preparation Iris Lindsay
	18 am	Susan Wass & Pat Smith
		Jacqui Powlesland & Peter Gamston
Feb	01 pm	Preparation Beryl Cartwright
		Pat Smith
		Preparation Iris Lindsay



## FLOWERS

Dec	07	Joan Currie
	14	Christmas Tree/Poinsettias
	21	Christmas Tree/Poinsettias
	28	Christmas Tree/Poinsettias
Jan	04	Christmas Tree/Poinsettias
	11	Beryl Cartwright
	18	Elaine Gudem
	Friday 23	Induction
Feb	01	Val Obriain



## COFFEE

Dec	07	Jill & Robbie McBride
	14	Val Obriain & Sarah Hopwood
	21	Pat & Ben Smith
	28	Marjorie Lee, Iris Lindsay & Judith Bungey
Jan	04	Sue Birdseye & Linda McCormac
	11	Peter Gamston & Gwen Mee
	18	Susan Wass & Theo Howells
	25	Jill & Robbie McBride
Feb	01	Pat & Ben Smith
	Note:	Reserve Irene St Clair



## REST & CHAT

Dec	04	Iris Lindsay & Joan Currie
	11	Jill & Robert McBride
	18	Pat Smith & Gwen Mee
	25	No Rest & Chat
Jan	01	No Rest & Chat
	08	Marjorie Lee
	15	Jean Stanley
	22	Iris Lindsay & Joan Currie
Feb	29	Jill & Robert McBride
	05	Pat Smith & Gwen Mee



Every effort has been made on the rota list to meet individual circumstances. However, please change with someone else if the dates are not convenient for you - Thank You

### Churches Together in Witney & District Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 18<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2009

Date	Time	Location
Sun 18 <sup>th</sup>	6.00pm	CTiW St Mary's Church Green
Mon 19 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm	Ceewood Hall      Smith's Estate
Tues 20 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm	St John's Church      Hailey
Weds 21 <sup>st</sup>	7.30pm	Congregational Church
Thurs 22 <sup>nd</sup>	7.30pm	Our Lady & St Hugh RC Church
Fri 23 <sup>rd</sup>	7.30pm	High St Methodist

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and

