



**DOWNING PLACE
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
CAMBRIDGE**

PLACE MATTERS



**ISSUE 57
DECEMBER 2023 - JANUARY 2024**

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Cover photograph by Jess Uden

FROM THE MINISTER

It would not be a surprise if we were struggling to get into the mood for Christmas. The world's ills are real, and can cast an encompassing greyness, quite apart from anything we are going through more personally. Maybe we wonder if the garish decorations are really appropriate, or the parties quite in tune with the spirit of the times. Then there's those carols: 'O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie'; do we? 'Joy to the world'; really? 'Come and join the celebration'; must we?

Yet, if ever there have been times when the message of Christmas has been needed, isn't this one of them? After all, Jesus wasn't born into a world of peace or plenty; political turmoil and international tension, religious division and our inhumanity to each other were entirely commonplace then. Christ's gift is peace, his promise is new life, his way is love. Peace, life and love because that is what was needed. That's why the message of the angels excited the shepherds. What's not to like in an unexpected present of peace and goodwill, then or now?

So, far from being out of place, a season to celebrate that one's coming is timely. Since time immemorial, to do so people have made songs out of the birth of Christ. Indeed, some even think the angels serenaded the shepherds in song more than in speech. And frequently we describe Mary's and Simeon's responses as songs: the two that we have come to know by the opening of their Latin translations, *Magnificat* and *Nunc dimittis*. Inevitably, I have already been wondering what we should sing at this year's carol services. Golden oldies aplenty there will be, you can be sure, but given that the message was radical and arresting, we should never stop finding fresh ways to express it for new eras. So, one also looks for unfamiliar material.

Readers may recall that Alan Gaunt was a United Reformed Church hymnwriter, who died in the summer. Reviewing his oeuvre, I discovered a song about Mary. Inspired by Jeremy Taylor, a seventeenth century preacher, Gaunt depicts the mother-to-be as 'like a ship in full sail ... as fully laden as could be', whilst Taylor speaks of how Mary's 'very little burden ... hindered her not'. For Gaunt, her cargo was 'love's joy', of which he writes, 'in her the love of God was curled'. Both Taylor and Gaunt suggest that bearing this love of God stirred in Mary four things: joy, thanksgiving, tranquillity, and charity.

They also suggest that, like Mary's, the Christian's life involves carrying the love of God about our person. Maybe even that it is curled within us as within Mary. As such, it offers so intimate an encounter with God that our joy can be nourished and strengthened. Gaunt complements Mary's ecstasy with that of her

cousin, the equally pregnant though rather older Elizabeth, who would give birth to John the Baptist: ‘such colliding joys were theirs that nothing out of heaven compares.’ These grey days are not the time to dilute our rejoicing in this Word made flesh, but profoundly to remind ourselves of it. It is our hope, our joy.

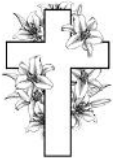
The tenderness of Gaunt’s ‘curled’ image is heartwarming. But might it not also be challenging? When God was curled within Mary it was not permanent; an uncurling took place; we call it birth, after which she laid her child in a manger. Mary’s son was born into the dust and joy of human life. He walked the streets of Galilee and Jerusalem. He transformed the lives of people constrained by illness or injustice. He restored those damaged by wandering from righteousness. He went to the cross. He sprang from the tomb. And so it is with us. Yes, there is immense comfort and help in the idea of God curled within us, but are we not to uncurl God’s love so it bears fruit in our daily lives, for the healing of those around us? Jeremy Taylor talks of how ‘when the blessings of God descend upon us, they should be published in the communion of saints so that our charity and eucharist (thanksgiving) may increase that of others.’ You see, Christmas is not just about the gift of God’s love to us, but also about us joining with all who strive to take the gift of God’s love into the world. And what else does the hurting world need this Christmas?

I find Gaunt’s closing lines helpful:

‘... love, far deeper than despair,
conceives the Word in us, whose birth
still brings the joy of heaven to earth!’

Bethan and Jess join me in sending warm good wishes for a Christmas season of joy, thanksgiving, tranquillity, and charity.

Nigel Uden



Many thanks to everyone at Downing Place who has sent letters, cards and greetings following the death of my husband Graham. They have been a great comfort to John and David as well as myself. Thank you also for the care taken in making the funeral such a helpful occasion.

Elizabeth Caswell

(A tribute to Graham can be found on pages 12-13 - Ed.)

When Mary, like a ship in sail,

Based on Jeremy Taylor 1613-67

When Mary, like a ship in sail,
was swept before God's mighty gale,
as fully laden as could be,
she hastened in tranquility,
to greet Elizabeth and share
the cargo of love's joy with her.

The human hold could not contain
such gladness, nor could she restrain
the deep delight of heart and mind,
in which two glories were combined:
that she would bring her Lord to birth,
and serve him as her child on earth.

Her joy was joy for all the world;
in her the love of God was curled,
and when she came into the room
the baby in her cousin's womb
leapt up for very joy as well:
their meeting was love's festival.

Yes, such colliding joys were theirs,
that nothing out of heaven compares;
and yet it happened here on earth;
and every mother, giving birth,
might be as blessed as those two then,
and sing Magnificat again!

But mothers suffer grievous loss,
as Mary suffered at the cross;
and grief exceeds what heart can bear.
Yet love, far deeper than despair,
conceives the Word in us, whose birth
still brings the joy of heaven to earth!



Credit: Hans Strueb, The Visitation

*Public domain photograph
of 16th-century painting*

Alan Gaunt 1935-2023

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JANET AND TONY BOTTOMS – A PROFILE

Janet writes:

Tony and I met at Oxford through the Baptist Students' Society– not wholly surprising, since both our sets of parents served with the Baptist Missionary Society in different parts of Bengal. At that time, Tony's father had just retired after working as the senior doctor in a small missionary hospital and leper colony at Chandraghona, near the Burmese border, while my father was teaching at Serampore College, near Kolkata, founded in 1818 by William Carey and his missionary colleagues. Traditionally missionaries' children were sent to England for their schooling at a young age, there being no affordable air travel in those days. Tony had followed this pattern by becoming a boarder at Eltham College, which had been founded as a school for the sons of Free Church missionaries and, in his day, still had about fifty such pupils. My father, being himself a missionary's son, did not want that kind of upbringing for his children, but the chaos that followed Indian Independence and Partition forced a change of plan. Accordingly, when my elder sister reached secondary school age my mother brought us to England, bought a house in Norwich, and stayed there with us for a time. Later we spent some years being moved around between relatives and friends. These backgrounds would later give Tony and myself a shared understanding of the problems created by childhoods marked by geographical transitions and some lengthy family separations, but we also witnessed and were influenced by our parents' faith and their ideals of sacrificial service.

At the time we met in Oxford Tony was reading Law at Corpus Christi College, intending to become a barrister, while I, a year his junior, was reading English Literature and Language at St Anne's College with no idea what career I might follow. By the time Tony graduated, however, he had become disenchanted with the idea of being a barrister and, instead, obtained a place on a one-year Postgraduate Diploma course at the Institute of Criminology in Cambridge. The study of criminology was then very new in this country, and the course that Tony and seventeen other students attended was the first full-time course in the subject in any UK university. It should perhaps be explained here that, contrary to suggestions in some media outlets, 'criminology' has nothing to do with solving crimes but is a cross-disciplinary academic field that studies both the causes of crime and the ways in which societies respond to it through, for example, the work of police, courts and prisons. Tony did well on the course and was immediately offered a research post. Feeling, though, that he needed some practical experience, he chose instead to become a direct-entrant probation officer in Essex, working in Basildon New Town and the nearby smaller town of Wickford.

We decided to marry as soon as I graduated, which happened in the summer of 1962. Tony had found and rented a house in Wickford and I had had the good fortune to see an advertisement for a teaching post at the local secondary modern school. As there was, then, no requirement for teacher-training if one had a degree, I applied and was appointed. This was a challenging and instructive experience for someone educated at Norwich High School for Girls and a single-sex Oxford college. My pupils were a lively bunch, but they could be co-operative and chose to be so when the Inspector came to watch me perform, so I became a Qualified Teacher in the eyes of the Ministry of Education. Included among my pupils were some of Tony's younger 'clients': he was professional and did not tell me, but they did.



Wedding day in Norwich

This was an important learning time for both of us. We had no money, but Tony's wages paid the rent and mine bought the food. He learned to drive, I bought a cookery book, and we settled down to explore home-making together. We also joined the Wickford congregational church where, as we later discovered, the young Peter Peirce was also a member! After eighteen months, however, one of the staff at the Institute of Criminology got in touch with Tony again to invite him to return as a research assistant on a study of a young offender institution in Dover. This led to our first period of life together in Cambridge, during which Tony regularly travelled back and forth to Dover, while I continued as a teacher. My main post was in the Further Education college, where I taught a variety of apprentices – engineers, bricklayers, and plumbers on day release -- all of whom thought they had escaped 'English' when they left school. This came to an end in 1966 when our daughter Catharine was born – at home, as at that time there was no maternity hospital provision in Cambridge for anyone whose house could boast a bathroom. However, the peripatetic midwife service was good, and as Tony was fortunately in Cambridge at the time he was able to assist at the birth. Two years later our son Stephen was added to the family, though he was born in the Mill Road maternity hospital.

Meanwhile, as part of the university expansions in Britain in the 1960s, Sheffield University had decided that criminology should become one of its 'growth-point subjects'. Tony was appointed as the first Lecturer in Criminology there, with (very generously) a university-funded research assistant to help him. Personally, with images of dreary, Dickensian streets in my mind, I was not keen on the idea of moving to Sheffield but I soon found it to be a proud city with an interesting industrial history and an egalitarian and friendly culture. Under Tony's leadership, criminology in Sheffield flourished, and he was eventually promoted to a personal Professorship. Among other things, he found the city to be an excellent place for research into the relationship between crime and social conditions in differing housing estates. For my part, Sheffield gave me the opportunity to make greater use of my academic training by embarking on – and successfully completing – a part-time study for a PhD, as well as teaching literature to adults for the University's Extra-mural Department. In all, we had sixteen productive years in Sheffield, during which we joined Cemetery Road Baptist church, and added to the family with a second daughter, Erica. Sheffield is where our three children did most of their growing up, and it was a wonderful place for it with the Derbyshire Peak District almost literally on our doorstep. All three became and have remained loyal northerners despite later being brought south.



Two doctors!

In 1984 we returned to Cambridge after Tony was appointed as Wolfson Professor of Criminology and Director of the Institute, with a Fellowship at Fitzwilliam College. While he was Director, the Institute significantly expanded its teaching programmes -- and therefore also its staff -- by creating part-time Master of Studies (M.St.) courses for senior practitioners in the police, prison and probation services. These courses have generated some wonderfully creative, two-way interactions between practitioners and academics. Tony also worked hard over several years to secure assurances from the university that the Institute would soon be housed in a more appropriate, and larger, building - a promise that was (literally!) made concrete soon after he stepped down as Director after

fourteen years in the post. Meanwhile, I swapped Sheffield extra-mural teaching for similar work for the Cambridge Continuing Education department, including, to my great joy, lecturing on Shakespeare to students and adults of all ages from all over the world as part of the University's International Summer Schools. At this time I also applied for and was appointed to a part-time lectureship at Homerton College – then a teacher training college, now a full college of the University - and in time I became a Fellow of Homerton. Since the birth of Catharine (Cathy) all my teaching has been on a part-time basis due to my involvement with our children and, subsequently, our grandchildren, but in spite of my feminism I do not regret a day of it. We rejoice in and are very proud of what they have become and do.



Trying for a summing up, I feel that our lives and careers might best be described as 'Lifelong Learning', and the same can be said of our life in the faith in which we were brought up. Through the 'Honest to God' debate of the 1960s; unification discussions in the '70s; ecumenism, diversity and inclusivity, the place of women, and other such ongoing issues, we have been upheld and held. It would not be right to conclude this profile without adding our tribute to the various churches to which we have belonged over the years. Sometimes challenging, sometimes inspiring, sometimes frustrating, they have nourished us and enabled us to grow in our faith, offering us and our family friendship, care and the opportunity to serve. We thank God on every remembrance of them (Philippians 1:3)

**‘FROM OUR ECUMENICAL CORRESPONDENT’:
an upcoming *Place Matters* series**

Editor: in a conversation earlier this year, Augur Pearce spoke about the diversity of Christian groups and practices in the UK, and in Cambridge. With some experience of engaging with several such denominations, Augur proposed a Place Matters series, with each episode focusing on one denomination. explaining how it fits into the story of organised Christianity: the big issues which led to its separation from others and what is distinctive about it; and what it is like visiting a congregation of that denomination. The ten-episode series will begin next February, but I asked Augur for a brief ‘trailer’ for this issue. He writes:

“There's often a good deal we don't know about other Christian traditions. Why do Lutherans sing hymns sitting down? How do Baptists really view infant baptism? What is an iconostasis, and what purpose does it serve? Such questions may deter us from visiting their buildings in case we do something wrong, or cause misunderstandings as we try to work together. Denominational characteristics have always interested me, and I visit many other churches besides Downing Place. The Editor has now given me the opportunity to feed back into my ‘home church’ some of the lessons I learn elsewhere. We plan a quarterly ‘column’ in which I will write each time about an historic Christian tradition represented in Cambridge: its story, its practices and what it's like to worship there. The series will conclude with a reflection on Christian division, diversity and the ecumenical goal”.



SPONSORSHIP SOUGHT

Penny Milsom writes:

We wonder if anyone is in a position to sponsor and offer a room to a twenty-seven year old Ukrainian woman. Her mother and younger sister (who is away at university most of the time) live in Arbury and they are very keen to be reunited as a family.

The mother is willing to sponsor her elder daughter but has been told by the council that it would be overcrowding as they live in a one bedroom flat.

If someone sponsored her elder daughter, she could spend most of her time with her mother. If anyone is able to help, please contact Penny Milsom,.

GRAHAM CASWELL

1945-2023



Graham was born in Brighton in December 1945. The family soon relocated to Southall, West London where his formative years were spent, enjoying the friendship of his brother, Derrick, who was the elder by four years. They remained in close contact, forever grateful for the telephone.

Immersed in the life of Southall Congregational Church, Graham learned early the gifts and graces to which he would give such fruitful expression in ministry. He also developed a wealth of practical expertise that he would put at the disposal of any and every organisation that he would serve throughout his life. In a moving tribute at the funeral, David his son, said, 'he didn't just know how to change a head gasket, or lay concrete, or set up a mobile library. He also knew what to do when you were lost, lonely or sad and just needed some company and a warm meal inside you.

Whilst at New College, being prepared for ordination, he met Liz, Winnie the Pooh being among their early shared delights. They would go onto partnership

in both marriage and ministry. After a first pastorate together in East Finchley and Holloway, they moved to Rotherham, to be joint pastors of Herringthorpe United Reformed Church. Chris Croker, who has been their friend since they arrived there said at the service, ‘It brought the perfect team as both had different strengths. Graham was certainly the practical one, always able to maintain or repair anything and lead teams to do the same.’

When Liz accepted a call into the full-time ministry as Moderator of the Eastern Synod, Graham moved into a range of new roles, including family support. This change brought them to Cambridgeshire, and an association with Emmanuel Church which many have treasured. Graham was part of the team that pioneered the Fair Shares Café, and Liz Barrow worked with him as he headed up the cooking. She recalls: ‘It wasn’t really work as we had so much fun. He made our friends from Eddies so welcome and helped them to gain confidence. We spent a lot of time laughing at Graham’s jokes. He renamed some utensils. Esther the Zester, ... and Roger the Plodger, a handheld liquidiser!

Other works of goodwill absorbed him, not least through Cambridgeshire Hearing Help, where he was trained to service NHS hearing aids and was soon renowned for being what a colleague there described as ‘utterly capable ... the go to guy if any of us ever got stuck.’ He supported ministers both practically and pastorally in their retirement housing, and shared with Liz in preparing ministers for the realities of retirement.

All this is typical of one who is universally remembered as kind, but also very funny, with a quick quip, practical joke, and ready laugh.

Things gradually slowed for Graham, and he died on 19th October. Many are grateful for a life frequently transparent with the compassion that enables a community to throb with life, and which revealed his abiding commitment to the values that Jesus calls us to.

We hold in our hearts and prayers Liz, John, David and his wife, Jess, praying that they are sustained by happy memories and all that Jesus Christ offers.

NPU



OUR RECENT JUNIOR CHURCH SESSIONS - THAT “OVERLOOKED LANGUAGE”

Editor: Place Matters readers will recall an article in this year’s September issue, in which Jane Bower wrote about dance as the “overlooked language” – of communication in general, and in worship in particular. Here she tells us how she has been working on that ‘language’ with Junior Church, in an encounter with Paul’s first letter to the Thessalonians.

Over four consecutive Sundays, it has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with the willing group of people of all ages who form Junior Church members and staff, developing and practising a piece of movement to bring a new dimension to part of Paul’s first letter to the Thessalonians. November 19th having been agreed as the date to introduce this, Nigel sent me the lectionary readings, and among them was this passage from chapter 5, dealing with themes of light and darkness, sleeping and waking, being ready and being surprised. These all seemed to lend themselves readily to interpretation through dance, or as we prefer to think of it, storytelling with our bodies.

Despite a great number of obstacles regarding live streaming, AV malfunction, particular pieces of music being allowed or not allowed, factoring in rehearsal time on the apse and working around inevitable absences, we forged determinedly on, and at the time of writing our dance will be incorporated into worship next Sunday. Like a reading, prayer, hymn or sermon, it is not a performance, but an act of worship which should be delivered to the best of our ability, in order to put its message across clearly and helpfully.

While I may have steered the project, this has been very much a joint effort. The dance developed, changed and grew from ideas generated by both adults and children as we went along. My thanks go to Nigel for his open-mindedness to new forms of worship, to David Flynn and other AV team members whose skills have enabled the project to happen, to Ian, Mark and the whole congregation for enabling us to have time to rehearse on the apse, and to the Junior Church adults and children who have practised every week, with good will and not a trace of complaint, as well as practising at home. I would particularly like to thank those members who were willing to step outside their own comfort zone to encourage and support the children. I know what that feels like, and take my hat off to you, as I do to you all. Thank you. I hope St. Paul would be pleased.

Jane Bower

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JAMES CLERK MAXWELL PRIZE – DAVID FLYNN

The Scottish physicist James Clerk Maxwell (1831 – 1879) was responsible for the classical theory of electromagnetic radiation. Albert Einstein described Maxwell's work as the 'most profound and the most fruitful that physics has experienced since the time of Newton. Maxwell was born in Edinburgh, and the Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE) and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) jointly award a James Clerk Maxwell prize for 'groundbreaking contributions that have had an exceptional impact on the development of electronics and electrical engineering or related fields'. The RSE Royal Medals were instituted in 2000 by Queen Elizabeth II: in recent years, the award ceremony has been postponed due to the global pandemic, but last month, on 8th November, her daughter, the Princess Royal, made the award to the 2019-2023 Maxwell Medal recipients.

The 2019 James Clerk Maxwell prize for electronics and electrical engineering was awarded to David Flynn, together with his former colleague, Dave Jaggar (now in New Zealand), for their 'contributions to the development of novel Reduced Instruction Set Computer (RISC) architectures, adopted in more than 100 billion microprocessor cores worldwide.' Most readers will know that David is a member of Downing Place URC, and that he and Penny have for many years contributed a great deal to sustain our church fellowship and outreach. Therefore we take pleasure in congratulating David, and in celebrating this outstanding recognition of his contribution to the electronics that sustains the world as we now experience it.



The 8th November ceremony took place in (of course) Edinburgh, where David was in attendance with Penny as his official guest. Given their characteristic modesty, all this came to light only on account of a conversation about something else! While in Edinburgh, David and Penny were taken on a tour of the house in India Street where James Clerk Maxwell was born, now owned and run as a museum by a trust that promotes and honours his work.

We are grateful to David Thompson for drawing our attention to Maxwell's connection with Cambridge, and (in effect) with St Columba's Presbyterian

church. David kindly responded to our request for more information. In the early 1870s ‘religious tests’ for Fellows of Cambridge Colleges and University Professors were abolished (they had gone for undergraduates in the 1850s), and this resulted in an increase in the number of Presbyterians coming to Cambridge from Scotland and Ireland. Among them was James Clerk Maxwell, who had read Mathematics at Trinity (1850-54) and was briefly a Fellow of Trinity (1855-56) before going to Marischal College Aberdeen as Professor of Natural Philosophy in 1856. In 1871 he was appointed to the new Cavendish Chair of Experimental Physics and established the Cavendish Laboratory. While in Aberdeen he had been elected an Elder of the Church of Scotland, and he sustained this interest in the Church on returning to Cambridge. In 1879 he signed the petition to the Presbytery of London North for the establishment of regular services in Cambridge for Presbyterians, along with other Professors and leading Fellows. The Presbytery did establish such services in the Guildhall, but Clerk Maxwell had died of cancer on 5 November 1879 at the age of 48 before they began; however, it seems reasonable to expect that he would have become a member of the new St Columba’s church, which was formally established in 1881.

(Official photographs courtesy of Stuart Attwood Photography)



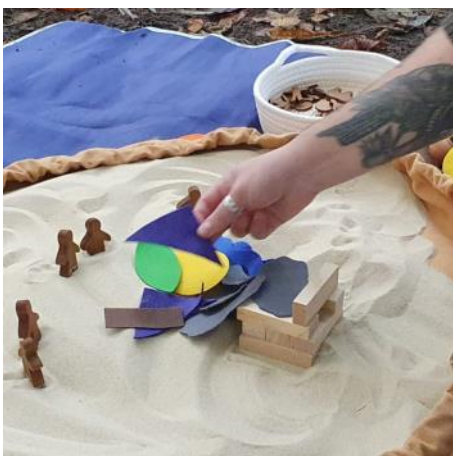
TRUMPINGTON FOREST GATHERINGS: REFLECTING AND GIVING THANKS

Editor: In September's Place Matters, our Pioneer Minister, Alex Clare-Young, wrote that 'on the 4th Saturday of each month from 4pm to 5.30pm, we host a Forest Gathering in Trumpington Meadows for those who are exploring spirituality. We meet in the forest school clearing just down the path from the Byron's Pool NCP car park. The gathering includes food, stories and activities for all ages.' Alex returns to these pages to update us on how this initiative is growing!

This month I am excited to update you on the growth of our Trumpington Forest Gatherings. This was initially a small part of what I do as Pioneer Minister serving in Cambridge City Centre, but has become both much bigger, and really quite significant for all of us who are involved. It is co-led by myself, Helen, Hannah and Sonya. We meet every month in the forest near the Trumpington Meadows estate. Our first Gathering was on Good Friday 2023 and there were 28 people. Our most recent Gathering was at the end of October and attracted 62 people. We aim to create a safe enough and brave enough space for folks of all ages, identities and faiths to



*participants gather
and share food and drink*



*Alex uses an Out of the Box kit to tell
a story.*

explore spirituality and create community.

Recently we were grateful to be awarded a Mission Grant from Eastern Synod which meant we could obtain two Out of the Box storytelling sets and a collection of percussion instruments, both of which contribute to two really important parts of our gatherings. The first is story: We use the Out of the Box method to tell biblical and/or wisdom stories in participative ways that enable the reader to connect the story with their own story. The second is song: each time we meet we drum and sing, enabling us to become community together in an authentic way.



*Alex uses felt circles
to lead in to story telling*

When we gather together, we make the woodland clearing our own wondrous space to explore together. Last month a participant, on arriving, was heard to say, “Wow, is this all for us?!” Setting up and clearing up in the forest is always interesting, with the above items, multiple tarps and rugs, camping chairs and stools, fairy lights, theme props, tables, food, hot drinks and more. We have included fire pits, sparklers, magic paper, leaves, twigs, sand, and more in our responding and reflecting times. We also know that the forest is not our own, and so we always strive to leave the space just as we found it, adding only laughter and footprints.



*A young participant
plays a hand drum.*

Please pray for and with us as we continue to discern how this project may continue to grow and to serve folks in Trumpington and beyond, as we seek to be God’s body in the world, sharing the hope that is within us, and only using words when absolutely necessary.

With peace,

Alex

*Right: Alex and Helen facilitate a song.
Last month’s visitor from Myanmar, Revd.
Pek, can be seen joining in with a djembe.*



Forest Gatherings

November - Waiting



December - Refuge



January - Comfort



February - Hibernation



March - Equinox



April - Growth



4th Saturdays - 4pm

at the forest school clearing near Byron's Pool
Car Park, 3 Woodend, Cambridge CB2 9LJ.

For more info contact
hello@solidarityhub.co.uk

solidarity hub



spirituality - stories - songs - snacks - community - connection

A PREVIOUS SPECIAL CAUSE, 'MOTIVATION', WRITES ...



We are celebrating our impact, made possible by you!

Our team... wanted to reach out to the Downing Place community to say a huge thank you for your support in the most crucial years dating back to 2020.

Since then, your donations have been the equivalent of two whole containers full of rough terrain wheelchairs transported to our local projects in Kenya, where they

were individually fitted to a disabled child or adult....

In 2022, thanks to [supporters like] you, we improved the lives of 99,000 people, including disabled people, their families and communities.....

Thanks to you, 432 disabled children now attend primary school, providing a valuable education and helping them be included in school. You helped a further 440 parents and carers to improve the eating, drinking, movement, communication and play of their disabled child. It's not just the children who benefitted - your support meant 398 parents and carers received training and joined peer support groups to develop support networks and build their families' livelihoods. Today, Motivation's work is needed more than ever.

LUNCHTIME CONCERTS - WEDNESDAYS AT 1PM

Free Lunchtime Concerts with a retiring collection for our monthly Special Cause. Booking is not necessary. Refreshments available before and after the concert. Come and bring friends!

6 December	Bernice Sammut Attard (piano)
13 December	Cambridge Voices Christmas Concert
20 December	Ian de Massini (organ)
10 January	Adam Parrish (piano)
17 January	James Williams (piano)
24 January	Mifune Tsuji Trio
31 January	Jack Tyndale Briscoe (piano)

<https://downingplaceurc.org/lunchtime-concerts/>

DOWNING PLACE URC SPECIAL CAUSE FOR DECEMBER 2023

‘THROUGH THE ROOF’



Our December 2023 special cause, is **Through the Roof**, a disability inclusion charity. It was nominated by Val Cooper, whose daughter Annette Stuart now works for the charity.

Annette writes: I heard about Through the Roof (TTR) at the group for adults with learning disabilities that I help with at my church in Ely. TTR wants all churches to catch the vision for disability inclusion - and know that it is not just about access, but about true belonging, as well as commissioning of disabled people - so everyone can use their God-given gifts and talents within the Church.

Our name was inspired by Luke 5, where four men enabled their paralysed friend to meet Jesus by lowering him ‘through the roof’. Everyone present was positively changed, and God was glorified.

In the UK there are over 16 million disabled people who need to know churches are supportive places to experience God’s love.

13% of disabled people surveyed in the UK ‘often or always’ feel lonely – that’s more than four times more than for non-disabled people (3%).

We have maintained three main programmes for over 25 years:

Faith – strengthening local churches in the UK and low-income countries to enable disabled people to be part of God’s family through 600+ volunteer ‘Roofbreaker’ disability champions

Fellowship – organising accessible, supported Christian holidays, retreats, groups and online groups to bless hundreds of UK disabled people and carers

Freedom – providing appropriate mobility equipment for 1000+ disabled people a year in low-income countries, along with a local language Bible.

A retiring collection will be taken on **Sunday 17th December**, and donations taken at the Downing Place Wednesday lunchtime concerts in December.

Alternatively, you may donate directly, at <https://throughtheroof.org/> and read much more about our Special Cause for December.



*Annette and daughter Sophie (right) enjoying worship
alongside adults with learning disabilities*

THINKING ABOUT THE CONFLICT IN ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

An opportunity is being prepared for interested members to gather on Zoom to learn about how faith might shape our understanding of the conflict in Israel and the Palestinian Territories.

This will be on Saturday 2nd December from 9.30am for up to ninety minutes.

We hope to have guests from the three Abrahamic faiths to help our thinking.

More details over the next couple of weeks, but for the time being do note the date if this interests you.

The meeting will be recorded for later listening if that is better for you.

NPU

DOWNING PLACE URC SPECIAL CAUSE FOR JANUARY 2024

‘CITY TO SEA’



Our January 2024 special cause, **City to Sea**, is a Bristol-based environmental organisation founded in 2015 by environmental campaigner Natalie Fee.

City to Sea campaigns to stop plastic pollution at source, working with communities, businesses, schools and everyday activists around the world to provide practical solutions to the plastic problem.

There is, sadly, one thing in common in all our streets, avenues, lanes and footpaths – LITTER! Much of it contains plastic, and if we don't de-litter it travels via drains, watercourses, streams and rivers to the sea, where it pollutes the beaches and oceans, kills birds, is eaten by fish and thus gets back into our food chain. The Ilkley Moor folk song wasn't wrong!

City to Sea initiatives focus on campaigns that stop marine plastic pollution at source. Its initiatives empower individuals to make a difference in their communities (e.g. through a 'refill' campaign – see <https://www.refill.org.uk>). It encourages corporates and retailers to pioneer plastic-free alternatives and to pressure the government to adopt new legislation through a plastic tax petition.



The City to Sea website lists 12 ways to reduce plastic pollution - see www.citytosea.org.uk and read much more about our Special Cause for December.

A retiring collection will be taken on **Sunday 21st January**, and donations taken at the Downing Place Wednesday lunchtime concerts in January. Alternatively, you may donate directly, at www.citytosea.org.uk.

Picture used with permission from City to Sea



Carol singers wanted!

The Cambridge Christian Aid Committee will be singing carols again in the Grand Arcade this year, **from 2-4pm on Saturday 9 December**. We really need singers to support us – it's a busy day with a lot else on, and we know there are many other demands on your time, but please think whether you can:

- Come to sing with us
- Ask your friends to come too
- Contact your local choirs
- Bring a musical instrument to accompany us

Contact Sheila Porrer to let us know you will be there. Many thanks.

Christmas Appeal



This year's Christmas Appeal is for the young women in Bangladesh who are trying to strengthen their independence and develop their careers by working on traditional crafts.

You can find out all about it in the November edition of Place Matters, or on the Christian Aid website.

Christian Aid and the Gaza tragedy

We are all horrified by the unfolding tragedy in Gaza, and the situation may have been transformed, for better or worse, by the time Place Matters is published.

Even before this latest escalation of violence, the humanitarian need in Gaza has been acute for many years due to the 16-year-old blockade enforced by Israel and Egypt and a lack of effective government in Gaza.

Across the occupied Palestinian territories, there is a sense of lawlessness, and Palestinians feel hopeless. Gaza's residents are living in incredibly harsh conditions, with soaring unemployment and poverty rates and a reliance on food aid.

What is Christian Aid doing in response?

Christian Aid has been working with the poorest and most vulnerable people in the Middle East since the early 1950s, when we provided humanitarian relief to Palestinian refugees.

Our established partners in Gaza are responding as best they can, under intense pressure, with medical relief and community-led initiatives such as food, shelter, sanitation and cash. However, it is extremely dangerous to move around, and supplies of essentials are running perilously low.

In southern Gaza, our partner is responding to those most recently displaced to south Gaza as a result of the war. They're providing:

- Mattresses
- Medicines (e.g. for people with chronic illnesses)
- Emergency food from a community kitchen

We're actively exploring ways in which we might also support Israeli civilians who've been directly impacted by the violence.

We're calling for a ceasefire because without it, we don't believe a safe and effective humanitarian response is possible.

Christian Aid has joined with a long list of Church leaders, including the Revd Dr Tessa Henry-Robinson, Moderator of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church, and the Rt Revd Sally Foster-Fulton, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland (and CEO of Christian Aid in Scotland), in calling for a just peace now.

More information about Gaza and how to donate to the Christmas Appeal on the Christian Aid website.

A prayer for the Middle East

God, hear our prayers for peace in the Middle East. May all people in the region be protected, safe from harm. We pray that this crisis will end now, with no further loss of life. God, may the injured and distressed know your healing presence. May the powerful and the decision-makers follow the paths of justice, mercy and peace. We pray for recognition of the dignity and value of every life. May the clamour of violence cease, replaced by the beating of swords into ploughshares.

God, in your name,

Amen

FOODBANK CHRISTMAS HAMPER APPEAL



Can you help us give at least five hampers to Cambridge City Foodbank's Christmas Hamper Appeal?

'Every year Cambridge City Foodbank partners with Cambridge Sustainable Food and Cambridge City Council to deliver Christmas treats, household essentials, fresh vegetables and Christmas toys to households in need across Cambridge. This year, with the need for foodbanks growing steadily in Cambridge, the impact of our hamper appeal will be ever greater.

We ask members of the public like you to put together a Christmas hamper that contains Christmas treats and some essentials that will last until the big day, and our partner agencies help us distribute them to people in Cambridge who are going without the basics. Cambridge Sustainable Food takes care of the fresh vegetables that are given to households in need shortly before Christmas, and the City Council arranges for toys to be distributed to families with children.

By putting a hamper together, you can make a huge difference to a household in Cambridge this Christmas. The winter months can be a particularly tough time for people who are struggling financially, but together we can join together and make Christmas a bit brighter for those going without the essentials. Due to growing need, this year we're aiming to break our previous record of 750 hampers pledged by the public.' Cambridge City Foodbank

www.cambridgecity.foodbank.org.uk

We are suggesting that as a community here at Downing Place URC, we work to put together the contents of three hampers, which will then be delivered to the Foodbank warehouse on the afternoon of 10th December.

There will be a sheet in the Office which will show the items still needed. We ask that you please place your name next to the item/items you would like to donate and then bring them in before Thursday 8th December. Thank you, in anticipation of your support.

If you would prefer to give money towards the campaign instead, or have any other questions, please speak to Jess.

THE CHERRY HINTON ROAD FELLOWSHIP



The Cherry Hinton Road Fellowship continue with their thriving series of weekly gatherings during December and January as follows:

- 5 December Christmas meal at Scotsdale's, Horningsea at 12.30 pm
- 12 December Carol Service at St Athanasios' Church, led by the Revd
Nigel Uden
- 19 December 'The Word Together' at Fulbourn URC
- 9 January Annual General Meeting
- 16 January 'The Word Together' at Fulbourn URC
- 23 & 30 January To be confirmed

Penny Milsom writes:

We are always happy to welcome people if they would like to come to any of our meetings, which are held at 2.30 pm at St Athanasios Hall unless otherwise stated.

Please contact me if you would like any further information.

LONGEST NIGHT GATHERING: THE BLUE TONES OF CHRISTMAS

Christmas can be a difficult or complicated time of year for many of us. Our Longest Night or Blue Christmas gathering, is a space where all of us can quietly reflect on the messages of love, peace, and light in a quieter, safer space, where there is time for remembering – remembering those we have lost, remembering those who find Christmas challenging, and perhaps remembering our own complicated feelings around this time of year.

Refreshments from 5.30pm, moving into a time of reflection starting at 6pm, for about 45 minutes. At Downing Place Church, on Thursday 21st December.

You are very welcome at this gathering whatever your beliefs, identity, or age.

The Longest Night Gathering is co-facilitated by Downing Place United Reformed Church and Wesley Methodist Church.

GOING PLACES -

A SORTIE TO THE SPITTING IMAGE EXHIBITION

‘Going Places’ is a self-running social group, open to everyone with some connection to Downing Place URC. It offers informal opportunities to go for a walk, go to the theatre or an exhibition - or any event, self-organised or public.

There have been several Going Places events so far, beginning with tea for 20 at the Grantchester Orchard tea rooms 18 months ago – see my account in the September 2022 *Place Matters*. Quite a number of GP members wanted to see the University Library’s free exhibition devoted to the latex puppets which so memorably featured in *Spitting Image*, the political satire TV series of 1984 onwards. We were not all able to find one date to suit us, so seven of us went in early November, and the rest have until February 17th to visit.

As well as meeting the puppets themselves – Margaret Thatcher, Princess Diana and the Queen Mother among others – we were able to see some famous and amusing clips from the original programmes, learn how the puppets were manipulated – the puppeteer’s hands were placed inside the latex hands of the puppet, and the puppet itself raised above the puppeteer’s head – and see the extraordinarily punishing timetable of filming which went into each 60 seconds of broadcast. Also on display were various letters of explanation, complaint and admiration, and a wealth of audio-visual and written information about the background of the series and how the puppets were devised, drawn and made.

Intrigued by all that we had taken in, we repaired upstairs to the tearoom, which entailed walking through lengthy, hushed corridors lined from floor to ceiling with ancient dark oak bookcases – more Harry Potter than *Spitting Image*. A good end to our latest GPs sortie.

Jane Bower

Anyone interested in joining the Going Places group can be added to the email list – just contact Jane Bower or Tim Rowland.



ADVENT HOUSE GROUPS

27/29 November, 11/13 December, 18/20 afternoons in person and evenings via Zoom

Three sessions looking at a variety of masterpieces of Western art, accompanied by thoughts and meditations to accompany them.

Week 1: The angels, the Visitation

Week 2: The animals, Adam & Eve

Week 3: The midwife and the Roman Empire

Monday afternoons 2pm at the home of Elizabeth Whitehorn, led by Janet Bottoms

Wednesday afternoons 3pm at the home of Penny Flynn, led by Penny

Wednesday evenings 7.30pm via Zoom, led by Penny

Please tell Penny which day you hope to attend, especially because there will be a limit on the numbers in each group.

Penny Flynn, House Group coordinator

LECTIO DIVINA



William and Deborah McVey are running Lectio Divina sessions on Friday mornings throughout Advent with advent themes.

On the 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd Friday mornings at 8.30 till 9.30.

If you've never tried this contemplative start to the day before, do please consider joining in the even as a one off trial.

Do make contact if you want to know more.



URC PFALZ ADVENT SERVICE

Sunday 17 December 6pm

You are invited to the joint online service between the URC and the Evangelical Church of the Palatinate on Sunday 17 December at 6.00 pm.

Zoom details:

Meeting ID: 965 1457 5443

Passcode: YourChurch

Link: <https://bit.ly/2Tf1EUk>

OPEN FORUM

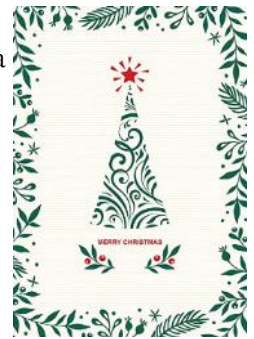
Saturday 20 January 2024 10.30-12.00

There will be an Open Forum held in Downing Place on January 20th from 10.30am -12 noon, when the Elders' would welcome the views of members, adherents and staff to discuss our vision for the future of the Hub, including whether or not to increase the times when it is open. Please do come and join in this conversation. Coffee will be available from 10am.

CHRISTMAS CARD BOARD.

There will be a board for friends and members to place a card to all in the Downing Place community in December.

This is to greet all without having to write so many Christmas cards. Please leave your cards in Reception and they will be displayed. The money saved could be donated to Christian Aid.



MONTHLY PRAYER GROUP MEETING.

The prayer group has met twice now and this is probably the time to encourage those coming to bring concerns that are on their minds to the meeting. Of course these could be silent prayers, but spoken aloud they would likely help others in their prayer lives. Prayer requests are collected in the box in the Hub and in the book in the Chapel.



RUTTER : GLORIA

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS : FANTASIA ON CHRISTMAS CAROLS

BAX : MATER ORA FILIUM

Downing Place Church
CB2 3EL
opposite John Lewis

Free candles & calendars for children

by candlelight

sung by aLUMNI

conducted by
STEPHEN ARMSTRONG

SATURDAY 2nd DECEMBER
SHOPPERS' CAROL CONCERT at 4pm

EVENING CAROL CONCERT with
RUTTER'S GLORIA at 7.30pm



under 16s free
Tickets £12 on the door
or on Eventbrite

ELDERS' 'AWAY DAY'

An Elders' day was held on November 18th in Fulbourn URC on the theme of "Discipleship" We used a variety of ways to consider the four definitions of Discipleship; Journeying, Following, Learning and Serving.

It was a fruitful day of reflection and sharing, seeking to find new ways of thinking about this topic and how to spread the good news of Jesus Christ in our everyday encounters. We used the booklet "Leading a Whole-life Disciplemaking church" to expand and enlighten our thoughts.

Pippa Jones

SYNOD DAY

Saturday March 9th 10.30-4pm

Please note this date in your diary. The Synod day will run from 10.30am-4pm at Downing Place.

Please try to consider whether you could offer a chunk of time to help steward or serve teas/coffees between 9.45am and 4.30pm.

No need to email Pippa yet, she will ask for offers in January/February.



DOWNING PLACE CHURCH'S CHRISTMAS FAIR

Saturday 9 December

10.30am - 3pm

Come and help raise funds for:



and



- Gifts • Plants • Crafts •
- Books • Knitting •
- Food & preserves •
- ...and more!

Accompanied by refreshments & music.



Longest Night

A space for those of us who find Christmas hard,
where we can quietly reflect on messages
of love, peace, and light.

Thursday 21st December, Downing Place URC

Refreshments from 5.30pm, moving into
a time of reflection from 6pm

You are very welcome at this gathering whatever your beliefs, identity, or age.



Two forthcoming Christmas concerts
in Downing Place United Reformed Church



1.00pm – 2.00pm, Wednesday December 13th
Cambridge Voices' Christmas concert, featuring
Ian de Massini's Away in a Manger,
plus music by Byrd, Butterworth, Britten, Tabakova,
and the World Premiere of a new *Lullaby*.



1.00pm – 2.00pm,
Wednesday December 20th
Organist Ian de Massini performs
Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Suite,
Prokofiev's Sleigh Ride,
Waldteufel's Skater's Waltz,
and *Vivaldi's Winter Concerto*
from *The Four Seasons*

WALDENSIAN DAY 2024

Wesley Methodist Church, Cambridge, on Saturday 20 January 10:30am-3pm

A special programme for the 850th Anniversary of the Waldensian movement, including an rare in-person visit to the UK from **Deacon Alessandra Trotta, Moderator of the Tavola Valdese** of the Union of Methodist and Waldensian Churches in Italy.

There will be:

- Worship led by **The Revd Steven Cooper** and friends from Wesley's Chapel, City Road London
- Panel discussion - What Synodality means for our ecclesial traditions.

Participants:

The Revd Dr Tim Macquiban, attendee on behalf of the British Methodist Church at the Ecumenical Symposium on Synodality at Durham in June, former Director of the Methodist Ecumenical Office Rome

The Revd Canon Dr Jeremy Morris, National Ecumenical Adviser for the Church of England.

Father Jan Nowotnik, Director of Mission and National Ecumenical Officer at the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

The Revd Dr Robert Pope, Convener of the United Reformed Church's Worship, Faith and Order Committee.

Deacon Alessandra Trotta

- A time for eating and chatting
- Updates from the Waldensian Church in Italy

Please bring your own lunch; tea and coffee will be provided.

No registration necessary, please just come along on the day and bring friends!



DECEMBER DIARY

	Date	Name	Time	Location
Fri	01-Dec-23	Lectio Divina (see p.30)	8.30am	Zoom
Sat	02-Dec-23	Thinking about the conflict in Israel and the Palestinian territories (see p.23)	9.30am	Zoom
Sat	02-Dec-23	aLUMNI Christmas Concerts (see p.32) Conducted by Stephen Armstrong	4pm & 7.30pm	Church
Sat	02-Dec-23	Nightlite	10:00pm - 4:00am	Emmanuel Room
Sun	03-Dec-23	Choir Rehearsal	10:00am	Church
Sun	03-Dec-23	Sunday Worship with Communion led by the Revd Nigel Uden	11:00am	Church
Sun	03-Dec-23	Solidarity Prayers	6:30pm	The Hub
Sun	03-Dec-23	Open Table/Solidarity Social	7:30pm	The Hub
Tue	05-Dec-23	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship Christmas Meal	12:30pm	Scotsdales, Horningsea
Wed	06-Dec-23	Lunchtime Concert - Bernice Sammut Attard (piano)	1:00pm	Church
Wed	06-Dec-23	Solidarity Hub Social Action Drop In	7:30pm	The Hub
Thu	07-Dec-23	Midweek Worship led by Jane Bower	11:00am	Church
Thu	07-Dec-23	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Fri	08-Dec-23	Lectio Divina	8.30am	Zoom
Sat	09-Dec-23	Church Christmas Fair (see p.33)	10:00am	Downing Place URC
Sat	09-Dec-23	Nightlite	10:00pm - 4:00am	Emmanuel Room
Sun	10-Dec-23	Choir Rehearsal	10:00am	Church

	Date	Name	Time	Location
Sun	10-Dec-23	Sunday Worship led by Penny Flynn	11:00am	Church
Sun	10-Dec-23	Church Christmas Lunch	12:30pm	Gibson Hall
Sun	10-Dec-23	Solidarity Prayers	6:30pm	The Hub
Sun	10-Dec-23	Solidarity Social Action Group	7:30pm	The Hub
Mon	11-Dec-23	Officers' Meeting	10:15am	Minister's room
Mon	11-Dec-23	Advent House Group Week 2 (see p.30)	2pm	At the home of Elizabeth Whitehorn
Tue	12-Dec-23	Carol Service	10:00am	Church
Tue	12-Dec-23	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship - A Carol Service led by the Revd Nigel Uden	2:30pm	St Athanasios Church
Wed	13-Dec-23	Lunchtime Concert - Cambridge Voices Christmas Concert	1:00pm	Church
Wed	13-Dec-23	Advent House Group Week 2	3pm	At the home of Penny Flynn
Wed	13-Dec-23	Solidarity Hub Social Action Drop In	7:00pm	The Hub
Wed	13-Dec	Advent House Group Week 2	7.30pm	Zoom
Thu	14-Dec-23	Prayer Meeting	10:15am	St Columba's Chapel
Thu	14-Dec-23	Midweek Worship with Holy Communion led by the Revd Nigel Uden	11:00am	Church
Thu	14-Dec-23	Knit One Give One	1:30pm	The Hub
Fri	15-Dec-23	Lectio Divina	8.30am	Zoom

	Date	Name	Time	Location
Sat	16-Dec-23	Nightlite	10:00pm - 4:00am	Emmanuel Room
Sun	17-Dec-23	Choir Rehearsal	10:00am	Church
Sun	17-Dec-23	Sunday Worship led by the Revd Nigel Uden followed by a Retiring Collection for 'Through the Roof' (see pp 22-23)	11:00am	Church
Sun	17-Dec-23	Open Table Carols	7:00pm	Church
Mon	18-Dec-23	Advent House Group Week 3	2pm	At the home of Elizabeth Whitehorn
Tue	19-Dec-23	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship - at Fulbourn for 'The Word Together'	2:30pm	Fulbourn URC
Wed	20-Dec-23	Lunchtime Concert - Ian de Massini (organ)	1:00pm	Church
Wed	20-Dec-23	Advent House Group Week 3	3pm	At the home of Penny Flynn
Wed	20-Dec-23	Advent House Group Week 3	7.30pm	Zoom
Thu	21-Dec-23	Blue Christmas event (see pp.28&33)	5.30pm	Church
Thu	21-Dec-23	Midweek Worship led by the Revd Dr Alex Clare-Young	6:00pm	St Columba's Chapel
Fri	22-Dec-23	Lectio Divina	8.30am	Zoom
Sat	23-Dec-23	Solidarity Hub Forest Gathering	4:00pm	Trumpington Meadows
Sat	23-Dec-23	Nightlite	10:00pm	Emmanuel Room
Sun	24-Dec-23	Choir Rehearsal	10:00am	Church
Sun	24-Dec-23	Sunday Worship led by the Revd Nigel Uden	11:00am	Church

	Date	Name	Time	Location
Sun	24-Dec-23	Christmas Eve Service with Holy Communion led by Revd Dr Alex Clare-Young	11:30pm	Church
Mon	25-Dec-23	Christmas Day Service with Holy Communion led by Revd Nigel Uden	11:00am	Church
Thu	28-Dec-23	Midweek Worship with Communion led by the Revd Professor David Thompson	1:00pm	Church
Sat	30-Dec-23	Nightlite	10:00pm - 4:00am	Emmanuel Room
Sun	31-Dec-23	Sunday Worship led by the Revd Deborah McVey	11:00am	Church

JANUARY DIARY

	Date	Name	Time	Location
Wed	04-Jan-23	Midweek Worship	11:00am	Church
<i>Sat</i>	<i>06-Jan-24</i>	<i>Epiphany</i>		
Sun	07-Jan-24	Sunday Worship with Communion led by the Revd Nigel Uden	11:00am	Church
Sun	07-Jan-24	'Lighten our Darkness': A sequence of Readings & Music for Epiphany with choral music from Cambridge Voices	4.00pm	Church
Sun	07-Jan-24	Solidarity Prayers	6:30pm	The Hub
Sun	07-Jan-24	Open Table/Solidarity Social	7:30pm	The Hub
Mon	08-Jan-24	Officers' Meeting	10:15am	Minister's room
Tue	09-Jan-24	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship AGM	2:30pm	St Athanasios Church
Wed	10-Jan-24	Wednesday Lunchtime Concert - Adam Parrish (piano)	1:00pm	Church

	Date	Name	Time	Location
Wed	10-Jan-24	Solidarity Hub Social Action Drop In	7:00pm	The Hub
Thu	11-Jan-24	Prayer Meeting	10:15am	The Chapel
Thu	11-Jan-24	Midweek Worship with Holy Communion led by the Revd Nigel Uden	11:00am	Church
Thu	11-Jan-24	Knit One Give One	1.30pm	The Hub
Sun	14-Jan-24	Choir Rehearsal	10:00am	Church
Sun	14-Jan-24	Sunday Worship with The Revd. Dr. Steve Langford	11:00am	Church
Sun	14-Jan-24	Solidarity Prayers	6:30pm	The Hub
Sun	14-Jan-24	Solidarity Social Action Group	7:30pm	The Hub
Tue	16-Jan-24	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship join Fulbourn URC for 'The Word Together'	2:30pm	Fulbourn URC
Tue	16-Jan-24	Elders' Meeting	7:30pm	Zoom
Wed	17-Jan-24	Wednesday Lunchtime Concert - James Williams (piano)	1:00pm	Church
<i>Thu</i>	<i>18-Jan-24</i>	<i>Week of Prayer for Christian Unity begins</i>		
Thu	18-Jan-24	Gibson Lunch	12:30pm	Gibson Hall
Thu	18-Jan-24	Knit One Give One	1.30pm	The Hub
Thu	18-Jan-24	Midweek Worship led by the Revd Dr Alex Clare-Young	6:00pm	St Columba's Chapel
Sat	20-Jan-24	Downing Place Open Forum	10:30am	Church
Sun	21-Jan-24	Choir Rehearsal	10:00am	Church
Sun	21-Jan-24	Sunday Worship led by the Revd Nigel Uden followed by a Retiring Collection for <i>City to Sea</i> (see p.24)	11:00am	Church

	Date	Name	Time	Location
Sun	21-Jan-24	Solidarity Social Drop In	6:30pm	The Hub
Sun	21-Jan-24	Open Table Communion Service	7:00pm	Church
Tue	23-Jan-24	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship	2:30pm	St Athanasios Church
Wed	24-Jan-24	Wednesday Lunchtime Concert - Mifune Tsuji Trio	1:00pm	Church
Wed	24-Jan-24	Pioneer Minister's Steering Group	2:30pm	Rooms 1 & 2
Thu	25-Jan-24	Midweek Worship with Communion led by the Revd Professor David Thompson	1:00pm	Church
Thu	25-Jan-24	Knit One Give One	1.30pm	The Hub
Sat	27-Jan-24	Solidarity Hub Forest Gathering	4:00pm	Trumpington Meadows
Sun	28-Jan-24	Choir Rehearsal	10:00am	Church
Sun	28-Jan-24	Sunday Worship led by the Revd Nigel Uden	11:00am	Church
Sun	28-Jan-24	Church Meeting	12:30pm	Church
Sun	28-Jan-24	Solidarity Prayers	6:30pm	The Hub
Sun	28-Jan-24	Solidarity Scripture	7:30pm	The Hub
Tue	30-Jan-24	Cherry Hinton Road Tuesday Fellowship	2:30pm	St Athanasios Church
Wed	31-Jan-24	Wednesday Lunchtime Concert - Jack Tyndale Briscoe (piano)	1:00pm	Church
Sun	04-Feb-24	Choir Rehearsal	10:00am	Church
Sun	04-Feb-24	Sunday Worship with Holy Communion to be led by the Revd Nigel Uden	11:00am	Church
Sun	04-Feb-24	Solidarity Prayers	6:30pm	The Hub
Sun	04-Feb-24	Open Table/Solidarity Social	7:30pm	The Hub

MEMBERS PREACHING ELSEWHERE

3 December	Liz Caswell	Melbourn
	John Proctor	Abbey Lane URC, Saffron Walden
	Janet Tollington	Bar Hill
10 December	Liz Caswell	Stetchworth & Cheveley
	John Proctor	Buntingford
	Janet Tollington	Abbey Lane URC, Saffron Walden
	Nigel Uden	Fulbourn
17 December	David Cornick	Buntingford
	Janet Tollington	Stetchworth & Cheveley
	Nigel Uden	Fulbourn (3pm)
	Nigel Uden	Abbey Lane URC, Saffron Walden (5.30pm)
24 December	Liz Caswell	Holy Trinity, Bottisham
	Deborah McVey	St Luke's LEP, Cambridge
	Nigel Uden	Fulbourn (3pm)
25 December	Nigel Uden	Fulbourn (9.30am)
31 December	Penny Flynn	Melbourn
	Janet Tollington	Bassingbourn
7 January	Chris Baker	Christchurch, Newmarket
	Liz Caswell	Holy Trinity, Bottisham
14 January	Liz Caswell	Stetchworth & Cheveley
	Penny Flynn	Buntingford
	Janet Tollington	Water Lane, Bishop's Stortford
	Nigel Uden	(Fulbourn)
21 January	Chris Baker	Fenstanton
	David Cornick	Clare
	Janet Tollington	Buntingford
28 January	Janet Bottoms	Fulbourn (am)
	Penny Flynn	Bassingbourn
	Deborah McVey	St Luke's LEP, Cambridge
	John Proctor	Melbourn URC
	Janet Tollington	Trinity, Burwell
	Nigel Uden	Fulbourn (6pm)

LECTIONARY FOR DECEMBER & JANUARY

These are the readings suggested by the Revised Common Lectionary, as in ROOTS, the material used by our Children's Ministry team. They may be altered if that is the preacher's wish.

3 December (Advent Sunday)

Isaiah 64:1-9
Psalm 80:1-7,17-19
1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Mark 13:24-37

10 December (Advent 2)

Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 85:1-2,8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

17 December (Advent 3)

Isaiah 61:1-4,8-11
Psalm 126 or Luke 1:46b-55
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8,19-28

24 December (Advent 4)

2 Samuel 7:1-11,16
Luke 1:46b-55 or
Psalm 89:1-4,19-26
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38

25 December (Christmas Day)

Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-14,(15-20)

31 December (Christmas 1)

Isaiah 61:10-62:3
Psalm 148
Galatians 4:4-7
Luke 2:22-40

7 January (Baptism of the Lord)

Genesis 1:1-5
Psalm 29
Acts 19:1-7
Mark 1:4-11

14 January (Epiphany 2)

1 Samuel 3:1-10,(11-20)
Psalm 139:1-6,13-18
1 Corinthians 6:12-20
John 1:43-51

21 January (Epiphany 3)

Jonah 3:1-5,10
Psalm 62:5-12
1 Corinthians 7:29-31
Mark 1:14-20

28 January (Epiphany 4)

Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Psalm 111
1 Corinthians 8:1-13
Mark 1:21-28





Photograph by Jess Uden

MAGAZINE EDITOR: Tim Rowland

ITEMS FOR MAGAZINE:

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WEB EDITOR: Jess Uden

Please send all items to be included in the February edition to both Tim and Ann
by the cut off date of **Wednesday 17 January**.

The December/January edition will be available from **Sunday 27 January**.