

# **Aylesbury Methodist Church & Centre**

## **‘LINK’**



## **November - December 2016**

**Aylesbury Methodist  
Church & Centre**

**Buckingham Street**

**Aylesbury, Bucks. HP20 2NQ**

Registered Charity No. 1129749

**Church Office: 01296 426526**

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**Aylesbury Methodist Church & Centre Website**

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

(AMC Weekly Notice Sheet and LINK magazine can now be  
found on the website)

**Minister**

**Rev Helen Kirk**

01296 488963

[revhelenkirk@sky.com](mailto:revhelenkirk@sky.com)

**The Office Staff  
wish you all a  
Happy Christmas  
and a Peaceful**





There has been much talk in the news in recent weeks about division: People have aligned themselves as either 'Remainers' or 'Brexiters' and many heated discussions have been had in the last months. Wherever we are in the world we are classified as either an immigrant or part of the indigenous population (in the UK I qualify for the

latter but I know for a fact that my gene pool is a soup of Dutch, German & Romanian to name but a few!) In the US some people chant 'build the wall' to signify that they want a physical separation from Mexico, and in various parts of the world certain items of clothing are singled out as problematic and are even banned. The emphasis is on that which divides humanity rather than unites.

And yet the Biblical vision of heaven, of a time when God's purpose has been fulfilled, reads very differently:

*I looked again. I saw a huge crowd, too huge to count. Everyone was there - all nations and tribes, all races and languages. And they were standing, dressed in white robes and waving palm branches, standing before the Throne and the Lamb and heartily singing:*

*Salvation to our God on his Throne!*

*Salvation to the Lamb! (Revelation 7. 9-10)*

It is a vision in which difference is recognised but celebrated; where there is no 'right' colour but a rainbow of possibility; where the barriers of language are overcome by shared understanding; where the diversity of custom is valued and respected and all are encompassed within the deep and unfathomable love of God.

The challenge is to make our church a snapshot of heaven on earth. It is one of the joys of AMC to have people from all over the world, as well as people from diverse backgrounds with wide ranging abilities and resources from across the generations. It means that not everybody thinks like us or shares the same joy in the things we value, and yet

mostly, through grace and love, we aim to form a community of Christ; to be his body here in Aylesbury.

And this must be our calling: in a world that is so focused on division the Church must be the place that offers a different vision. As a community we must be intentionally inclusive, purposely tolerant, deliberately loving and outrageously gracious. For then and only then will the words of John 3.16 ring true:

‘For God so loved the world (that’s all of it ..... in all it’s wonderful divergence) that he gave his only son’.

Helen.

## **Helen’s Surgery**

Don’t worry I’m not going to perform any operations! However I have become aware that people drop into the church wanting to talk with the minister but often aren’t willing to leave a contact number if I’m not there.

So I have decided to be available on Thursday mornings 10am – 12noon at the church for anyone who wants a chat. I’m sure I will be available at other times, but this means people will be guaranteed to catch me if need be.



## Where can you find God?

He is in a new born baby's  
First breath of life.

In sunshine breaking through storm clouds  
And touching your skin  
With fingers of warmth.

In finding new love after heartache  
It can happen - if you let it.

He is in a smile from a stranger  
Who may become a friend.

In peace after a long conflict

He can be found in new buds  
on a seemingly dead tree.  
He is the true creator.

In sun glinting off the blue sea  
In a way that it looks like heaven.

You can see God in the face  
Of someone who has seen life  
And has walked with faith.

God can be found by holding the hand  
Of someone close to death;  
Seeing the peace on their face,  
And being privileged to be  
With them at that time.

At Holy Communion.

This is when I feel closest to God  
At this time - I see Him  
And feel Him.

And the Holy Spirit is renewed in me.



For me, God is everywhere, in everything that I see and do. He created this wonderful earth, and He created me. I totally belong to Him.

So I say, not Where is God. But .... Where isn't God!

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## THE STORY OF THE POPPY

During the First World War (1914–1918) much of the fighting took place in Western Europe. Previously beautiful countryside was blasted, bombed and fought over, again and again. The landscape swiftly turned to fields of mud: bleak and barren scenes where little or nothing could grow.

Bright red Flanders poppies (*Papaver rhoeas*) however, were delicate but resilient flowers and grew in their thousands, flourishing even in the middle of chaos and destruction. In early May 1915, shortly after losing a friend in Ypres, a Canadian doctor, Lt Col John McCrae, was inspired by the sight of poppies to write a now famous poem called 'In Flanders Fields'.

McCrae's poem inspired an American academic, Moina Michael, to make and sell red silk poppies, which were brought to England by a French woman, Anna Guerin. The (Royal) British Legion, formed in 1921, ordered 9 million of these poppies and sold them on 11 November that year. The poppies sold out almost immediately and that first ever 'Poppy Appeal' raised over £106,000; a considerable amount of money at the time. This was used to help WW1 veterans with employment and housing.

### Haig Fund Poppy

The following year, Major George Howson set up the Poppy Factory to employ disabled ex-Servicemen. Today, the factory and the Legion's warehouse in Aylesford produces millions of poppies each year.

The demand for poppies in England was so high that few were reaching Scotland. Earl Haig's wife established the 'Lady Haig Poppy Factory' in Edinburgh in 1926 to produce poppies exclusively for Scotland. Over 5 million Scottish poppies (which have four petals and no leaf, unlike poppies in the rest of the UK) are still made by hand by disabled ex-Servicemen at Lady Haig's Poppy Factory each year, and distributed by our sister charity Poppyscotland.

## IN FLANDERS FIELDS

In Flanders' fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place: and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders' fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe;  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high,  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders' Fields.

*Lt Col John McCrae*

<http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/>





## WRITE FOR RIGHTS 2016

**“When I receive all these letters saying that I’m not alone, it makes me feel great. And I think, yes, it’s true. I’m not alone. They really are supporting me. It makes me happy. It’s exciting to think that there are people who still care about the rights of other people ... and they don’t even know me”.**

This is what Mexican Yecenia Armenta said before her release. (She was jailed on the basis of a ‘confession’ extracted after 15 hours of horrendous torture.)

When she was released in June she said:

**“I am immensely grateful and think people writing letters are doing the nicest thing you can do, which is helping people who are facing such unjust situations. It fills me with pride and I truly feel that’s a wonderful thing.”**

This winter we can all support someone whose rights are being abused. It only takes a few minutes to write a card or letter. But for someone jailed for exercising their freedom of speech, a family fighting to defend their land, or a child tortured because of their appearance, they are invaluable. A message of solidarity shows them that they are not alone. Appeal letters from us and millions of other Amnesty supporters around the world force authorities to address human rights violations, cruelty and injustice. They show presidents, justice ministers, police chiefs and prison governors that the world is watching.

The material will be displayed in the vestibule shortly. It is simple to take part. Please help yourself to a copy of the case(s) of the Prisoner(s) of Conscience you have decided to write to. Guidelines are given in each case and **it is very important that we follow them.**

There are 12 cases, and among them is the case of **British-Iranian charity worker Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe**. She was about to fly home in April with her two-year-old daughter Gabriella, following a family visit, when



she was arrested at Teheran airport. Nazanin was allowed to leave Gabriella with her parents, but the toddler's British passport was confiscated. Since then Nazanin has been allowed only very restricted visits from her family, subjected to solitary confinement, and accused of plotting the 'soft overthrow of the Islamic Republic'. She may have been coerced into making a 'confession'. Nazanin's family said she was sentenced to five years in prison on unspecified 'national security related charges' on 6 September. Amnesty does not believe she received a fair trial.

We can send a solidarity card to the Prisoner of Conscience and/or a letter to the Authorities as outlined on each case sheet.

If you took part in last year's campaign, you might like to check the updates.

On behalf of all those to whom you are writing, many thanks for taking part.

*Annelies Varsey*



# CHRISTMAS SERVICES



<i>Sunday 4 Dec</i>	<i>10.30am</i>	<i>Gift &amp; Toy Service</i>
<i>Sunday 18 Dec</i>	<i>5.00pm</i>	<i>Candlelit Carol Service</i>
<i>Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> Dec</i>	<i>4.00pm</i>	<i>Christingle Service</i>
<i>Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> Dec</i>	<i>11.30pm</i>	<i>Midnight Communion</i>
<i>Sun 25<sup>th</sup> Dec</i>	<i>10.30am</i>	<i>Christmas Day Family Service - bring a toy</i>

*All are welcome!*

**Will you be writing Christmas cards this year to people that you see each Sunday at Church?**

As an alternative, why not write just one card to everyone and give a donation to one of the Church charities instead?

In December, when the post box appears, there will also be a board in the Church entrance where you can pin your cards.

Please then give your donation to:

Karibuni Trust (Joy Murphy)

Missions (David Wilderspin)

Christian Aid (Jennie Torpey or Maureen Tucker)

Action for Children (Pauline Noble or Jennie Torpey).



**Do support the Charity Christmas Card Shop in the Church.**

**Monday - Saturday**

**10.00am - 4.00pm**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Nov - 17<sup>th</sup> Dec.**



**CARDS FOR GOOD CAUSES**

**CHRISTMAS POST BOX REMINDER!**

This will be put up at the beginning of December. Please remember that the Church post box is only for Christmas cards being given to **regular members of the congregation.**

They are not delivered to people, so if they are not collected, they are thrown away after Christmas.

If you're not sure that your friends and colleagues come to Church often, then please send your cards by ordinary post instead.

***Please make sure you write surnames on your cards!***



## AN ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS GIFT



Why not make a difference this Christmas - to some of the poorest people in the world! Give an 'alternative' Christmas gift. Instead of buying your family and friends gifts they may not need, like or want, you can buy something in their name that will help people who are living in poverty. With every gift you receive a personalised Christmas Gift Card describing the gift chosen, to send to your friends or family.

There are many organisations that provide this service - here are some of the charities and a few examples of gifts:



**Extraordinary gifts:** Christmas Gifts to help the World's poorest people.

**£10** to provide a family in Ethiopia with half the materials needed to build a beehive. The family contributes the other half and, with training, the honey provides a sustainable year-round source of income.

**£70** to provide a vulnerable woman in Nepal with the start-up capital to develop a business like a tea shop, fruit & vegetable stall or corner shop, selling locally produced products. This could enable to repay her loan, which in turn will help other women start their own businesses too.

[www.allwecan.org.uk/extraordinary-gifts/extraordinary-gifts](http://www.allwecan.org.uk/extraordinary-gifts/extraordinary-gifts).

Some catalogues on the Vestibule table or from Ruth Watkins.



Fun and thoughtful gifts that bring double delight. Not only will your loved ones be thrilled to receive these gifts, but they

will bring real hope to children in desperate need.

**£8** - The simple gift of a mosquito net will help parents sleep peacefully, knowing their children are protected from this fatal disease.

**£17** - In many parts of the world, children are kept away from school to help fetch firewood. The gift of an energy saving stove will save wood, protect the environment and keep more children in school.

**£40** - The gift of a goat is a wonderful way to invest in a family's future. It provides nourishment for a family and extra income when bred and sold

<http://www.musthavegifts.org/gifts.html>

**PRESENT AID**  
GIFTS THAT KEEP GIVING

Present Aid is a charity gift website that supports the work of Christian Aid.

Whether you buy a goat or life-saving equipment, your gift could transform the lives of people living in poverty around the world.

**£8** - A pair of chickens to provide eggs to sell.

**£20** - A delivery kit to ensure a safe birth for mother & child in a developing country.

**£71** - Help send a child in rural Bangladesh to school for an entire year.

[www.presentaid.org/2016](http://www.presentaid.org/2016)



**OXFAM**

'Oxfam Unwrapped' gifts are changing lives around the world. From a 'Goat' gift in Malawi to a 'Safe water' gift in Cambodia,

**£9** - a pile of poo! Tried, tested and 100% natural... this isn't just any pile of poo, it's the ideal mix of manure, organic fertiliser and training in eco-friendly farming techniques to help a family grow a lot more crops.

**£20** – a composting toilet for a community or refugee camp

[www.oxfam.org.uk/shop/oxfam-unwrapped](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/shop/oxfam-unwrapped)

**Good  
Gifts  
Catalogue**

The original charity gifts catalogue, widely copied but never bettered. Unique ethical gifts to give and receive, at home and abroad, that are always wanted.

**£8** - Give a present to an elderly patient, stuck in hospital, unable to go home for the holidays.

**£15** - An hour's respite. Help towards the cost of a specialist babysitter for a family with a disabled child, so they can get a much needed break.

**£35** - Eye tests and specs for 5 elderly people. 95% of sub-Saharan Africans who need glasses don't have any. Giving elderly people the opportunity for eye tests and spectacles is the quickest way to bring happiness and improve their lives.

<https://www.goodgifts.org/>



### Karibuni Charity Gifts

Each Charity Gift represents a tangible, life-changing item that is used in our Kenyan projects. Ranging in price from £3 to £250, choose from a range of gifts. Whichever you buy, you will be sent a card to send to the recipient.

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

You will find some Karibuni catalogues in the church vestibule.



Whatever the gift, however big or small, you can relax in the knowledge that we'll give it our all, because whether it's for a friend, a husband or wife, your gift helps to give everyone a better life.

**£15** - A toolkit to maintain ten village water points

**£37** - A hand pump to provide safe drinking water

[shop.wateraid.org/](http://shop.wateraid.org/)



Kiva is an international non-profit organisation, founded in 2005 and based in San Francisco, with a mission to connect people through lending to alleviate poverty. We celebrate and support people looking to create a better future for themselves, their families and their communities.

By lending as little as \$25 (automatically converted to £ on the website) on Kiva, anyone can help a borrower start or grow a business, go to school, access clean energy or realize their potential. For some, it's a matter of survival, for others it's the fuel for a life-long ambition.

100% of every dollar or pound you lend on Kiva goes to funding loans. Kiva covers costs primarily through optional donations, as well as through support from grants and sponsors.

[www.kiva.org](http://www.kiva.org)



*as long as it takes .....*

Our next event is our  
**Christmas Gift Stall**

with  
Tombola and Children's Lucky Dip  
in Friars Square  
on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> November.



If you have any donations of unwanted gifts/tombola prizes or items suitable for the Lucky Dip, please give them to:

Jennie Torpey (581414), Pauline Noble (484940)  
or Sandie Steeden (331278)

**Our annual Gift & Toy Service will be held on  
Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> December.**

We ask that you bring along new gifts and toys for any ages from babies to teenagers. The gifts will go to local Action for Children centres.

*(Please don't wrap them, as gifts need to be matched with the children.)*

If you prefer to make a money donation, it will be used to buy presents for the children and young people.

***Rolls of giftwrap would also be very welcome!***



# J TEAM



Welcome to the J Team pages

*Christmas is a wonderful time of year. It is a time of fun, family, friends, gifts of giving and receiving and a time to remember that Jesus was born to save us all.*

We often hear and sing about that special time when Jesus was born. Below tells us some of the story.



Mary was a young woman who loved God. She was visited by an angel called Gabriel who said to her: "You will have a son and you will call him Jesus." Before Mary had Jesus, she had to travel...

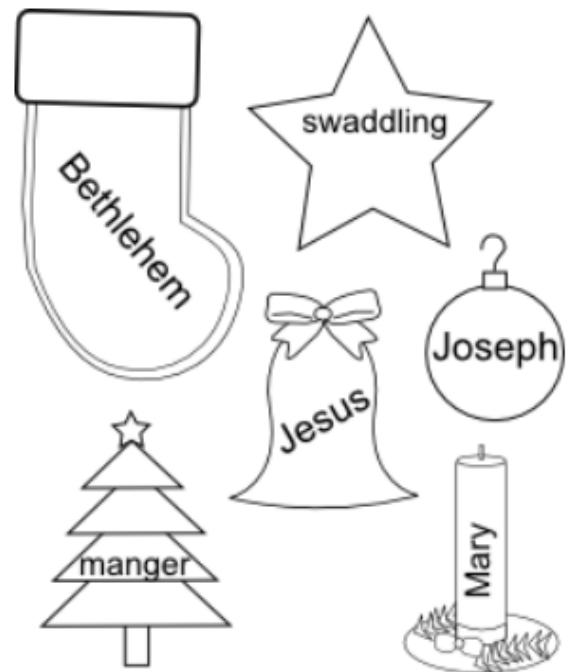
Finish the story with the words at the right.

M \_\_\_\_\_ and J \_\_\_\_\_ travelled to B \_\_\_\_\_.

M \_\_\_\_\_ had a baby and named him J \_\_\_\_\_. He was God's Son.

She placed J \_\_\_\_\_ in a m \_\_\_\_\_ which was a place for animals to eat.

He was wrapped in s \_\_\_\_\_ clothes, which were strips of cloth.



There were more angels in the story - they visited the shepherds and said: " This very day your Saviour was born -Christ the Lord." The shepherds said: " Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened."

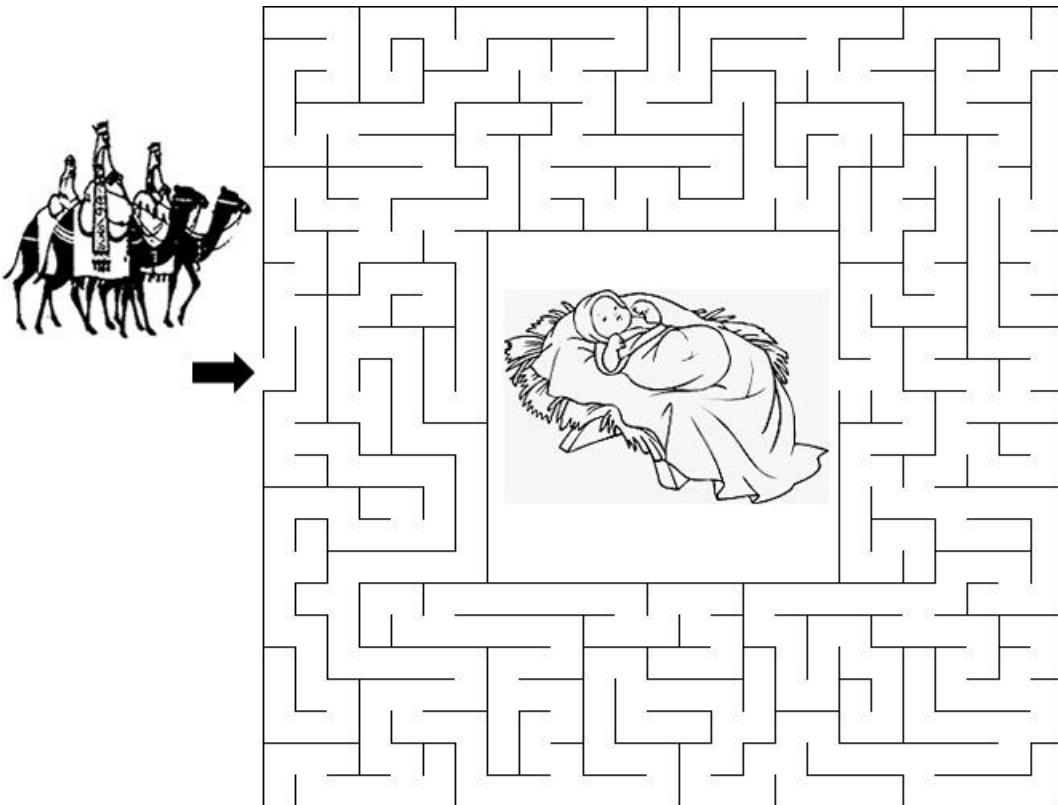
Can you find 10 shepherds on these two J-Team pages?



## Wise Men Search for Jesus

The bible tells us that wise men searched for Jesus: "We saw his star when it came up in the east." *Matthew 2:2*. The bible also tells us that they brought three gifts for Jesus: Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh. It took a long time to get to Jesus, when they did, they knelt down and worshipped him. *Matthew 2:11*.

Can you help the Wise Men find the way to the baby Jesus?



"Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

### Why Did Jesus Come?

Unscramble the words to complete the Bible verse and learn why God sent Jesus.

The \_\_\_\_\_ sent his \_\_\_\_\_ to be the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_.  
A E H T R F                      O N S                      U R A S O I V                      D R O W L

1 John 4:14



## CLOSED AGAIN

Father God, it happened  
Once more, again, today.  
I came to your house to  
Pray to you,  
Converse with You;  
To worship your Holy name.  
... but I could not get in.



The doors are locked again,  
The windows barred.  
Do I need an appointment,  
So that the padlock  
Will be unlocked for me?  
So that I can have  
Communion with You?



What has happened  
To make us all so scared?  
Have we reached so low  
That we will steal from Him?  
His church is a sanctuary,  
A shelter from life's  
Hatred and harm.

We hear, 'Stranger Danger',  
'Keep out those we  
Do not know'.  
And the words of Jesus:  
"Come into my Father's house"  
Echo throughout  
The empty vestibule.



So many churches  
Have boarded up windows  
And locked doors;  
Open only on a Sunday  
Between 10 and 12.  
What are they doing  
For the rest of the time?

The bibles are gathering dust.  
The altar is naked and unused;  
Just a few crumbs are left  
From past Communion.  
Only a distant whisper  
Of a hymn can be heard,  
like a memory of what was.

One day our Churches  
Will be open all day  
And all night,  
So that we can seek solace,  
Praise God's Holy name.  
And all His children  
Will be at Peace once more.

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# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sun 13 Nov	10.30am	<b>Remembrance Sunday</b> Family Service led by Mr David Neville	
Tues 15 Nov	12.30 for 1pm	Tuesday Fellowship Lunch	
Sat 19 Nov	4.00 - 6.00pm 7.00pm	Messy Church SOS: Bowling & Pizza (see Gill Marks to book)	
Sun 20 Nov	8.45am 10.30am	Service of Holy Communion led by Rev Helen Kirk Morning Worship led by Rev Mark Knight	
Tues 22 Nov	10.30am	Prayer Group in the Vestry	
Sat 26 Nov	Action for Children Christmas Stall in Friars Square		
Sun 27 Nov	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Rev Helen Kirk	
Tues 29 Nov	2.30pm	Tuesday Fellowship: Talk by Mrs Alison Watkins	
Sun 4 Dec	10.30am	Toy & Gift Service led by Rev Helen Kirk	
Sat 10 Dec	7.30pm	SOS: Christmas Meal with the Marks'	
Sun 11 Dec	10.30am	Service of Holy Communion led by Rev Helen Kirk	
Tues 13 Dec	2.30pm	Tuesday Fellowship Carol Concert led by Mr Arthur Sara	
Sun 18 Dec	10.30am 5.00pm	Morning Worship led by Mr Arthur Sara Candlelit Carol Service led by Rev Helen Kirk	
Sat 24 Dec	4.00 - 6.00pm 11.30pm	Messy Church & Christingle Service led by Rev Helen Kirk Midnight Communion led by Rev Helen Kirk	
Sun 25 Dec <b>Christmas Day</b>	10.30am	Christmas Morning Family Service led by Rev Helen Kirk	
<b>2017</b>			
Frid 6 Jan	Articles for January - February LINK magazine due in		
Sat 7 Jan	8.00pm	SOS: Planning Evening at the Storer's	
Wed 11 Jan	2.00pm	Bible Study	
Thurs 26 Jan	7.30pm	Bible Study	
Sat 4 Feb	8.00pm	SOS: 'Our Tunes' Evening at the Kemp's	
Sat 25 March	6.00pm	Caribbean Evening	
Sat 29 April	Explosion of Talent entertainment extravaganza		

**Q. What did Adam say to his wife on the day before Christmas?**

**A. It's Christmas, Eve!**

**Q. Why is it getting harder to buy Advent calendars?**

**A. Because their days are numbered!**



## Pastoral system

What does the term pastoral visitor mean to you? At the recent pastoral visitors' meeting we discussed that question. Whilst we all recognised the value of the care offered by visitors, we also became aware of other issues: guilt at not managing to get around everyone on your list; fear at going to people's homes who really didn't want a visit; an administrative nightmare as fewer and fewer people want to take on the role. Yet at its best it signifies a church friendship; a contact, a means of connection when the need arises.



Over the last few months a small group has been revising our pastoral system, aware that in some areas of the church's life it works very well, whilst in others there are huge gaps where we do not have the resources to offer the traditional 'visitor' model. In the course of this we became aware that people have different needs - some need a visit, others a phone call; some are part of a social group whilst others are happy to have a chat at church. Yet there was one common denominator that everyone participated in - the offer of friendship. With this in mind we have decided to move forward from using the term pastoral visitor to pastoral friends/church friend. This will be no sudden change, and in moving forward we will be very aware of the many different needs of everyone in our church family.

It will mean that care & contact with people can be offered through a variety of means. We will still have our designated pastoral team who will continue to keep in contact with everyone through traditional visits, phone calls, groups and social events but it also means that the culture of friendship is something that can be offered by us all. The pastoral care of those within the life of the church does not just fall to a few but is the job of the whole church community.

We hope that using this new way of working will enable more people to be involved and more people to feel contacted. If you would like to know more, please have a word with Helen Kirk or Pauline Noble.

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2016  
and  
24<sup>th</sup> December  
(with the Christingle Service)

4.00 - 6.00pm at  
Aylesbury Methodist Church



**'Gods family, our family'**

An event for the whole family to enjoy.

Crafts, story, songs and food.

**All are welcome.**

No charge - just a donation.

Contact the Church office to let us know you're coming!

01296 426526 or [office@aylesburymethodists.org.uk](mailto:office@aylesburymethodists.org.uk)

Invitation to join the Circuit Choir for the forthcoming  
Circuit Choral Service

## **OLIVET TO CALVARY by J H Maunder**

Passion Sunday Evening, 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2017, 6.00 pm

at Aylesbury Methodist Church

and on Palm Sunday Evening, 9<sup>th</sup> April 2017, 6.30 pm

at Tring Parish Church.

Singers will be most welcome, music scores will be provided.

Rehearsals will take place on most Friday evenings at 8.00 p.m., mainly  
at Aylesbury Methodist Church.

A precise schedule will be issued early January.

To confirm your interest and for more information, please contact  
Brenda Horne on 01296 428580, e-mail: [brendaj.horne@gmail.com](mailto:brendaj.horne@gmail.com)

**Aylesbury Bible Study 2017**  
 Wednesday 2.00 - 3.30pm & Thursday 7.30 – 9.00pm  
**Focusing on Paul's letter to the church in Philippi**



January	Wed 11 <sup>th</sup> & Thurs 26 <sup>th</sup>	Philippians 2: 18-30 'Taking a lead'
February	Wed 8 <sup>th</sup> & Thurs 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Phil 3:1-11 'Putting our trust in ... ?'
March	Wed 15 <sup>th</sup> & Thurs 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Phil 3:12-4:1 'Pressing on towards the goal'
May	Wed 17 <sup>th</sup> & Thurs 18 <sup>th</sup>	Phil 4:2-9: 'How to survive a local church'
June	Wed 14 <sup>th</sup> & Thurs 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Phil 4:10-23: 'Caring and sharing'

If you are looking for some challenging discussion,  
 some help to understand the nitty gritty of the Bible,  
 or you just want the opportunity to ask all the questions  
 you've never dared to ask, please come along.

**You don't have to commit to all the sessions;  
 just come to what you can.**

**All are welcome**

The next LINK magazine will be the  
 January - February 2017 issue.

**Please send in all contributions by  
 Friday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2017.**



To make sure we receive them, please send them to both addresses  
 below:

Jennie Torpey: [jennietorpey@ntlworld.com](mailto:jennietorpey@ntlworld.com)

AMC Office: [office@aylesburymethodists.org.uk](mailto:office@aylesburymethodists.org.uk)

or I can type them up for you if you let me have them in time.

## **Nativity**

It was cold, so very cold.  
Mary was huddled, wrapped tightly  
In a heavy blanket,  
on the back of a donkey.  
Joseph walked wearily beside her,  
As they made their way to Bethlehem.

Mary was heavily pregnant,  
She hoped that she could hold on  
until they had found somewhere  
To sleep for the night, as she  
Was so very, very tired.

Everywhere was full to overflowing.  
After being turned away yet again,  
Mary felt the start of her birth pains.  
Joseph told an Inn keeper that his wife  
Was going to have a child very soon.

A stable, behind the inn was offered,  
Warmed by the gentle breath of cattle,  
It would have to suffice.  
So they settled down for a long night.

Neither Mary nor Joseph realised,  
That God had journeyed with them  
throughout this long and arduous time.  
And was now present at the Holy birth.

God had indeed put everything in place.  
Shepherds, far away, had been visited  
by an angel, with a message from God,  
And were now on their way to pay homage.

Three wise men, Magi from the east,  
Were also told of this Holy event.  
They too must travel to see the child.  
The brightest star in the heavens  
would be their beacon, their guide.  
Whilst the shepherds and wise men  
Followed the star to Bethlehem.



Mary gave birth to a son.  
God's son.  
Whom she named Jesus.

There was an inner peace about Him,  
And a light shone all around.  
Even the animals moved nearer  
For a closer look, and bowed  
Their heads in reverence.

Soon the shepherds arrived,  
And told the story of the angel.  
They handed Mary a lambkin  
That had been newly born.  
A gift of purity for Jesus.

The Magi soon followed, and bowed  
Before the Christ child.  
Bringing their offering to Him,  
Special gifts, one from each,  
Of frankincense, myrrh and gold.

Suddenly, the heavens parted,  
And a multitude of angels  
Began, as one, to sing.  
'Let there be Peace on Earth  
From Heaven Forever and Ever'.

The world slept on,  
but Nativity had happened.  
God's Son, born then,  
Is our Saviour now.  
and He is with us.  
Forevermore.

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## OUR IMAGE OF JESUS

Discussion between two people, A and B, with their differing attitudes gradually converging.

(used in AMC service on 30<sup>th</sup> October)

A: It is of supreme importance

B: *That we get our image of Jesus*

A & B: RIGHT.

A: For there are too many blithering idiots

B: *well-meaning people,*

A: religious schismatics,

B: *church leaders,*

A: Marxists,

B: *Tories,*

A: anarchists,

B: *establishment figures,*

A & B: WHO ARE LEADING PEOPLE ASTRAY.

A: So listen carefully ...

Jesus

B: *- as we all know,*

A: came from a model family

B: *- his mother was pregnant when she got married.*

A: And lived in a secure home

B: *- they were refugees.*

A: As the old hymn says,  
'Throughout his wondrous childhood' ...

B: *- about which we know next to nothing ...*

A: 'he was mild and obedient' ...

B: *- he did a bunk when he was twelve.*

A: Jesus was the model working man,

B: *- he became redundant when he was thirty.*

A: encouraging entrepreneurship in others

B: *- he told Peter, Andrew, James, John and Matthew to give up their jobs.*

A: He kept good company,

B: *- dining out with beggars and prostitutes.*

A: He had a good word for everybody,

B: *- 'vipers', 'blind guides', 'hypocrites'.*

A: His conversation was about the finer things in life,  
B: - *dough, sheep, pig farming, wise virgins ...*

A: He never dabbled with controversy  
B: - *he just claimed to be the Son of God!*

A: Jesus never upset anyone by his language  
B: - *except priests, pharisees, pigeon sellers, executioners and Wealthy young men.*

A: He was respected in religious circles  
B: - *they wanted to lynch him after his first sermon.*

A: Jesus was a man among men  
B: - *and women.*

A: He was a man of God  
B: - *he was the Son of God.*

A: In his majesty, we see God at work  
B: - *in his humility we meet God in person.*

A: That's why he was worshipped  
B: - *that's why he was crucified.*

A: Jesus isn't here now  
B: - *he rose again on the third day.*

A: So we have to get on with it ourselves  
B: - *he sent his holy spirit to guide us.*

A: We have to build the kingdom!  
B: - *we have to celebrate his presence among us.*

A: We have to give a lead!!  
B: - *we are to follow where he calls ..*

A: stand up and be counted ...  
B: - *humbly ...*

A: like soldiers!!!  
B: - *as servants.*

A: We are a mighty army.  
B: *We are the body of Christ.*

A: It is of supreme importance  
B: *that we get our image of Jesus*

A & B: RIGHT.

## COINCIDENCE AT CHRISTMAS

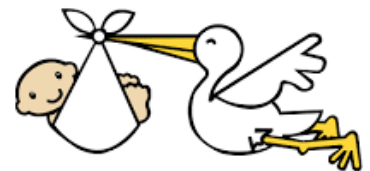
Have you ever tried to book a single room for a coach holiday at Christmas? Believe me, it is always difficult. Last year, the only available place for me was at Great Yarmouth. But that was good news, because I was born and brought up in Norfolk. They speak my dialect there.

As usual, I spent some time on Christmas Eve looking for a suitable church to attend on the festive day. I looked on the map in the Tourist Information Office, to find out how far I should have to walk to the parish church of St Nicholas. I knew it was there because Saint Nicholas is the patron saint of fishermen as well as being associated with Christmas. Alas, I saw it would take me too long to get there and return in time to for dinner in the hotel.

Never mind, I saw several other crosses marked on the map. Perhaps a nearby one might be appeal to me. No, the first one I came to was Greek Orthodox and the next was Catholic. Then third time was lucky. A large Methodist Church was advertising services at just the right time.

When I arrived next morning, less than twenty elderly people were gathering there, and when they took their seats they were scattered at the four corners of the room, so they seemed even fewer. It was obvious that I was a visitor. One of the younger ladies approached me. I quickly told her where I was staying and said I felt really at home, because Norfolk is my native county. I mentioned that I had worked as a Midwife Teacher in King's Lynn.

"Oh," she said, "I had a baby in the hospital in King's Lynn and I had a lovely, lovely midwife." Before I could ask her when that was, and wondered how I could find out if I had known her, she said, "Her name was Ionie Fuller."



I could not believe it. I had just sent a Christmas card to Ionie. I had known this Jamaican lady since 1971. Initially, she had been unable to complete her midwifery training, as her husband was in the RAF and kept being posted to different places. When he was nearing retirement, they returned to Marham and she finished her training as one of my students. They settled in Lynn. She eventually became the Nursing Officer in charge of the delivery suite and remained my friend.

When I returned from my holiday, I simply had to write to tell her how well she had been spoken of. She 'phoned me immediately. Her husband had read my letter to her, as she lay in her bed, for she was recovering from treatment for cancer. My letter had really brightened her day.

# Health Notes

2016 – No. 4

November 2016

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**The October Church Council agreed that we should explore the appointment of a paid lay worker. Areas that our Healthy Church discussions identified were youth, young adults, families and community outreach. So, in discussion with District advisors, we are forming an Appointments Panel to investigate our precise needs and draw up a detailed job picture and the sort of skills and person needed for the work. At present, timing is looking like a September 2017 start but this could change once the appointments team gets started.**



*The coffee bar at this year's Macmillan Coffee Morning*

**Also at the October church council meeting, Brian Latham, as head of the Community Coffee Bar action group, explained the thinking about developing this area.**

Agreement was given to continue the work and since then, a detailed Coffee Shop and Catering Plan has been created and sent to church council members. This will be discussed at an Extraordinary Church Council meeting after church on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> November at 12 noon. It includes the funding of a paid manager and deputy manager, whose salaries would be paid for by the increased turnover and profit from extended hours and food and drink offerings. The Leadership Team has seen the plan and unanimously approved it. It appreciated the extensive work and research that members of the action group had undertaken and the ongoing communications with existing coffee bar volunteers. 'It's exciting' was the most common reaction. Meanwhile, if you have any thoughts on either the Lay Worker needs or the coffee bar plans, please speak to Helen.



Not long ago I appealed for your support, having signed up to 'sleep rough' for one night in Birmingham in aid of Action for Children. This event, which runs in 10 cities nationwide, and has been going for 19 years, aims to raise awareness of the plight of the thousands of homeless young people in the UK. I had been inspired to get involved by the story of a young Openreach apprentice who shared that his mother had been homeless when he was very young. Although she didn't like to talk about it, he felt compelled to get involved, and on reading his story, so did I.

THANK YOU all for your generous sponsorship and messages of support in response to my appeal. I have been blown away by how you have responded to my ask, on behalf of Action for Children. Thank you so much.

Friday night 7<sup>th</sup> Oct in Birmingham was dry (mostly - there was a little shower as we made our way to our sleep site, but having woken up to many a bitterly cold morning since, I am truly grateful for the mild night). I was warm (having taken lots of layers and enjoyed a tasty hot meal) and pretty comfy (we slept in a churchyard, amongst the gravestones - it was grassy which has to be preferable to a cold hard pavement or doorstep). It was noisy though, as people left the posh restaurants and clubs nearby, seemingly feeling obliged to give us a fanfare on their horns at two and three am! However, we had hot tea and coffee on constant supply; some decent portaloos; security to look out for us; medics to look after us; and the promise of a cooked breakfast and homes to go to in the morning .....

***Totally different, then, from the reality facing thousands of young people every night.***

For some sleepers, I think the only way to get through the night was with the help of copious amounts of alcohol and rather noisy, tuneless singing. For my little group, (consisting of the Openreach apprentice who inspired me, one of his friends and two ladies who were doing it alone) we wanted to be more

reflective of what we were doing and why. We struggled to get our heads round why, for some, the choice of living on the streets is preferable to any other option.

There were some scary numbers shared on the night:

- 300,000+ young people living on the streets, with a further 80,000 expected to become homeless this year.
- 1.5m disadvantaged children across the UK all in need of help.

**Thanks to you and other sponsors, Byte Night in Birmingham hope to raise £130,000 for Action for Children, which will go some way to providing this much needed support.**

For me, I think the reality hit on the Saturday morning as I left Birmingham on an early train - heading home - where I love and am loved. Then I became a little emotional and overwhelmed by it all. A warm bath and an early night (I was in bed before the children) saw me right again. I will do it again next year. I feel like I have to do anything I can to draw attention to this issue, and with your ongoing help and support, raise as much as possible to help.

Donations continue to be taken by the My Donate website (100% of your donation goes to the charity) until the end of December. To donate, please visit [www.mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/gailhydon](http://www.mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/gailhydon)

Thank you.

Gail Hydon



## Dementia - the journey ahead!

When I wander, don't tell me to come and sit down.  
Wander with me.  
It may be because I am hungry, thirsty, need the toilet.  
Or maybe I just need to stretch my legs.

When I call for my mother, (even though I'm ninety!),  
don't tell me she has died.

Reassure me, cuddle me, ask me about her.

It may be that I am looking for the security that my mother once gave me.

When I shout out, please don't ask me to be quiet ... or walk by.

I am trying to tell you something, but have difficulty in telling you what.

Be patient. Try to find out.

I may be in pain.

When I become agitated or appear angry, please don't reach for the drugs  
first.

I am trying to tell you something.

It may be too hot, too bright, too noisy.

Or maybe it's because I miss my loved ones.

Try to find out first.

When I don't eat my dinner or drink my tea, it may be because I've forgotten  
how to.

Show me what to do, remind me.

It may be that I just need to hold my knife and fork.

I may know what to do then.

When I push you away while you're trying to help me wash or get dressed,  
maybe it's because I have forgotten what you have said.

Keep telling me what you are doing over and over and over.

Maybe others will think you're the one that needs the help!

With all my thoughts and maybes, perhaps it will be you who reaches my  
thoughts, understands my fears, and will make me feel safe.

Maybe it will be you who I need to thank.

If only I knew how.



*'Norman McNamara, affectionately known as Norrms shared this poem with The Caregiver's Voice. Although, we were unable to find the poet, we are posting this to honor Norrms and others who also walk the road of dementia and are taking steps to bring to light what it means to live with this disease. Poem slightly edited and formatted. (TCV Ed.)'*



## MOVEMBER LIP SERVICE

Why would a seemingly intelligent chap like Boys' Brigade Captain Steve Kemp risk ridicule by attempting to grow a moustache this November?

It is, of course, because he wants to join the millions of people worldwide who are drawing attention to men's health issues, which The Movember Foundation believes is in crisis.



They say, "Men experience worse longer-term health than women and die on average six years earlier. Prostate cancer rates will double in the next 15 years. Testicular cancer rates have already doubled in the last 50. Three quarters of suicides are men. Poor mental health leads to half a million men taking their own life every year.

**That's one every minute.**

Our fathers, partners, brothers and friends are facing this health crisis and it's not being talked about. We can't afford to stay silent."

The Movember Foundation have big ambitions. By funding global programmes on men's health, their aim is to reduce the number of men dying prematurely by 25% by 2030.

If you would like to help, you can sponsor Steve Kemp's attempts to grow his 'Mexican bandit' look by donating at

*<http://mobro.co/smegbadger> and please Gift Aid if you can!!*

For the Movember website, visit: <https://uk.movember.com/?home>





The Methodist Church

## WHITECHAPEL MISSION

(Founded by Revd. Thomas Jackson, 1896)

212, Whitechapel Road, London, E1 1BJ  
(Tel: 020 7247 8280) (Fax: 020 7392 2707)

[www.whitechapel.org.uk](http://www.whitechapel.org.uk)  
Registered Charity No: 227905



Monday, October 10, 2016

Peter Watkins  
14 Dorset Place  
Aylesbury  
Buckinghamshire  
HP21 9BW

Dear Peter,

Please accept and pass on our most grateful thanks to the members of Aylesbury Methodist Church for their Harvest Gifts, Clothing & £5.00. Their support is essential to the continuation of our work with Homeless and vulnerable people.

Harvest gifts provide the essentials for our clients who are reliant on the Mission for the provision of what, to most of us, would seem a very basic existence. This is particularly true as we approach the colder months when life on the streets is at its most difficult.

Please convey our gratitude to everyone who contributed. May it please them to know that together we really are making a difference to those who are homeless and disadvantaged.

With every blessing,

Tony Miller MBE  
On behalf of Whitechapel Mission

Receipt No: 25252  
/C

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### Daycentre

practical approach to helping people who are homeless, with food, clothing, showers, advice and counselling  
020 7247 8280  
[mission@whitechapel.org.uk](mailto:mission@whitechapel.org.uk)

### Lifeskills Centre

changing lives programme aims to equip people with the skills to sustain a tenancy and to get back to work  
020 7392 2715  
[lifeskills@whitechapel.org.uk](mailto:lifeskills@whitechapel.org.uk)

### Education Centre

citizenship programme showing the effects of drugs and alcohol on real lives whilst gaining a knowledge on poverty, deprivation and exclusion  
020 7392 2702  
[education@whitechapel.org.uk](mailto:education@whitechapel.org.uk)

### Whitechapel House

residential project offering affordable housing to London's key workers



## MINISTERING TO OTHERS

‘Therefore comfort one another with these words’

1 Thessalonians 4:18

Professor Tony Campolo once attended the funeral of an acquaintance, and by mistake ended up at the wrong funeral parlour. The body of an elderly man was laid out, and his widow was the only mourner there. She seemed so lonely, Campolo stayed for the funeral and then accompanied her to the cemetery. After the committal service, as they were driving away Campolo confessed that he hadn’t actually known the lady’s husband. ‘I thought so,’ she replied. ‘I didn’t recognise you. But it doesn’t matter. You’ll never, ever, know what this means to me.’

Philip Yancey writes: ‘Simple availability is the most powerful force we can contribute ... We rightly disparage Job’s three friends for their insensitive response to his suffering. But read the account again: “When they came, they sat in silence beside Job for seven days before opening their mouths” ... those were the most eloquent moments they spent with him.

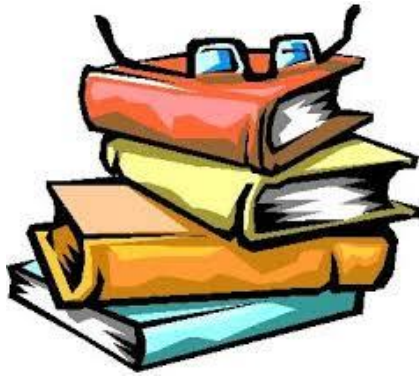
Instinctively I shrink back from people in pain. Who knows if they want to talk about their predicament or not? Do they want to be consoled or cheered up? What good can my presence possibly do? My mind spins out these rationalizations and as a result I end up doing the worst thing possible: I stay away ...

No one offers the name of a philosopher when I ask, “Who helped you the most?” Most often they describe a quiet, unassuming person ... who was there ... who listened more than they talked, who didn’t keep glancing down at a watch, who hugged and touched, and cried ... someone who was available and came on the sufferer’s terms, not their own.’

**That’s** how you minister to others.

Source: The Word for Today, a daily devotional, produced free of charge by United Christian Broadcasters. For your regular quarterly copy write to UCB at FREEPOST RLTX-ABUL-GRAR, United Christian Broadcasters, Westport Road, Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 4JF, or telephone 0845 60 40 401.

As a charity, UCB relies on donations, so a gift of at least 50p per copy, which just covers the cost of printing the booklet, would be appreciated from time to time. A few copies (donation 50p) are usually available in the front vestibule. Please give the money to Jennie Torpey or leave it at the coffee bar for her.



## **'Tales from a College Manager'**

A series of 9 tales

### **1. The Figurehead**

In her early teens, my daughter was diagnosed with 'Petit Mal' that resulted in her school banning her from all Physical Education. Her first epileptic fit occurred after school in their swimming pool when she was training for the 'Under 12 School Swimming Team'. There will always be a group of children that attack those kids that are different. My first indication that my daughter was being bullied happened when I caught her stealing money from my wallet. It was being used to purchase items from the school tuckshop in an attempt to appease these bullies. A quick visit to the headmaster soon put a stop to that activity.

On leaving school at sixteen, my daughter enrolled on a Catering Course at our local Further Education College. This was before we moved to Aylesbury. The bullies followed her by enrolling on Secretarial Courses at the same college. For them, revenge was sweet. Their verbal attacks resulted in my daughter taking an overdose of her medication in the toilet after only three weeks of course attendance. The college immediately called an ambulance and my daughter was transferred to A&E where her stomach was pumped out. I wasn't surprised to receive a letter from the Head of Fashion & Catering Services requesting Carol's and my presence the following Monday morning.

On showing this letter to my boss, he was appalled that I had not yet learnt to read between-the-lines of official letters. The college was going to expel my daughter! He quickly grabbed a couple of pamphlets from the shelf in his office, thrust them into my hands and told me to go home and prepare my case for her defence. This defence lay in the field of Educational Law rather than Employment Law. Most FE staff in the 1980s were recruited directly from industry rather than education and were, therefore, ignorant of the difference between the two fields. Under Educational Law, at that time (1982), a college was responsible for the welfare of a child (under 19) from the moment it left home to the moment that it returned home. This requirement was not necessary in Employment Law of children as such law only applied to the workplace.

On the Monday morning, Carol and I were shown into this very spacious office by the departmental secretary. Sitting behind a desk in the centre of the room were two people. One was a man dressed in a rather work-worn suit and the other was a young lady dressed to kill in the latest fashion. She promptly ordered us to sit on two hard chairs facing them. She quickly introduced herself

as Head of Department and the man as Senior Lecturer in Catering i.e. Leader of the Catering Section. There was no offer of refreshments. Instead, she went off into a terrible rant about the disgusting nature of this incident and its poor reflection on the reputation of the college. Throughout this time, the man refused to meet my eyes and his head kept dropping lower and lower onto his chest until he appeared to be sleeping. Finally, we got to her main point - that Carol & I had deliberately withheld the nature of our daughter's problems. It would, therefore, be best for all concerned, if we accompanied the Section Leader to collect our daughter from her class. The three of us would then depart from the college under his escort - never to return!

When I didn't move from my seat but requested to be shown Form ABC123 instead, the result was electrifying. The Senior Lecturer sat up straight, enquiring if by any chance I was connected with Further Education. Clearly, he had not read Form ABC123 otherwise he would have known that I was a Senior Lecturer in Computer Education. On receipt of this information, he turned to the young lady with the suggestion that she should restart the interview with an apology to me. This she refused, stating that she would never apologise to such outrageous liars. Consequentially, the Senior Lecturer formally took over the interview and the two of us hammered out a care package for my daughter that enabled her to complete the two year course and acquire her City & Guild Certificates. These certificates were never any use to her future employment. Health and Safety in Employment Law forbade her from becoming a Chef in case she had a fit and her head dropped into a vat of boiling fat.

At the end-of-first-year party to celebrate my daughter's class achievements, I was informed that the young lady had failed her probationary year and was leaving at the end of the summer term. She had lost all control over her staff when my final comment at the interview reverberated around the staff room. *"If I was a liar then she was nothing but a jumped up little tart with no knowledge of children or their education"*. Even today, I have no regrets. Further Education has always been a Cinderella Service. It was probably at its lowest ebb during the 1980s when it experimented with appointing local industrial celebrities to high positions in its colleges. This was in order to attract local students onto its courses. The times must have been really desperate for a College Principal to actually combine Fashion and Catering Services into complementary studies.

Dave Rogers

(Coming next LINK: 'The Long Weekend')

## 'Twas the Week Before Christmas (at school !!)



'Twas the week before Christmas and all through the school not a pupil was silent, no matter what rule. The children were busy with paper and paste; the mess that they made with it couldn't be faced.

The teacher, half frantic, and almost in tears, had just settled down to work with her dears, when out in the hall there arose such a clatter - up sprang the kids to see what was the matter!

Away to the door they all flew like a flash; the one who was leading went down with a crash. Then what to their wondering eyes did appear but a green Christmas tree! (to decorate I fear!)

When the teacher saw this, she almost grew sick. She knew in a moment it must be (the janitor) old Nick! She ran to the door (all her efforts were vain), but she shouted, and stamped, and she called them by name:

"Now Tommy! Now Sandy, Now Judy and Harry!  
Stop Billy! Stop Robert! Stop Donny and Sherry!  
Now get to your places get away from the hall.  
Now get away! Get away! Get away all!"

As the leaves before the wild hurricane fly, the pupils, pell mell, started scurrying by. They ran to the blackboard and skipped down the aisle; their faces were shining and each had a smile.



First came a basket of popcorn to string - then came the Christmas tree (menacing thing). As the tree was brought in there arose a great shout; the pupils were merrily romping about.

The state they were in could lead to a riot; the teacher was sure, if allowed, they would try it. Her nerves how they jangled! Her temples were throbbing! The rush of her breath sounded almost like sobbing!

The lines of her face were as fixed as a mask; it was plain that she didn't feel up to her task. The look in her eye would have tamed a wild steer, but the children ignored it - they did every year!



A tear from her eye and a shake of her head soon led me to think that she wished she were dead. She spoke not a word but went straight to her work; strung all the popcorn which broke with a jerk.

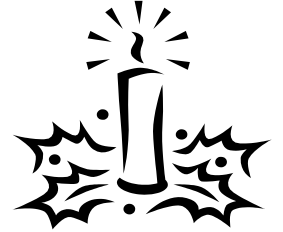
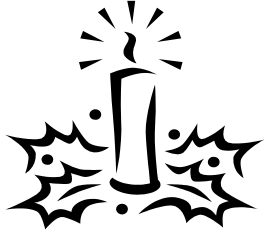
But at last it was finished and placed on the tree; then came the bell and the children were free! Their shrill little voices soon faded away and peace was restored at the end of the day. As she looked at the Christmas tree glistening and tall, she smiled as she whispered, "Merry Christmas to all!"





*Aylesbury Methodist Church & Centre  
Buckingham Street, Aylesbury*

**CANDLELIT  
CAROL  
SERVICE**



***A Festival of Lessons  
and Carols***

*Telling the story of the Nativity with readings  
From the Bible and traditional Christmas Carols.*

*Portrayed with a presentation*

*By Children of the Junior Church.*

*Congregational singing accompanied by the Organ,  
Choir, Music Group and Junior Choir, together with  
readings by members and friends of the Church.*

*Service led by Rev Helen Kirk*

***SUNDAY EVENING  
18th DECEMBER 2016***

***5.00 pm***