

# **Aylesbury Methodist Church & Centre**



## **‘LINK’**

**November - December  
2019**

**Aylesbury Methodist Church & Centre  
Buckingham Street  
Aylesbury, Bucks. HP20 2NQ**

Registered Charity No. 1129749

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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 be found on the website)

**Minister:**

**Rev Richard Atkinson**  
01296 339899  
[revrja@outlook.com](mailto:revrja@outlook.com)

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



Dear Friends

I hope to start a meaningful conversation. I want to stress there is no hidden agenda here, rather an attempt to engage the church in reflecting on the communal journey we share. Here are some broad brushstrokes, in the hope that, through discussion and prayerful consideration, some detail may emerge. The aim is for there to be a time for folk to come together and share their wisdom as we strive to discern the forward path to which our God is calling

*Firstly, to think on 'what is a Minister for?'*

About 20 years ago, the Connexion produced a DVD to encourage folk to answer this question. In that time ministry has changed, legislation has had an impact, new ways of working have emerged, and in many places resources are more stretched. So, what should be the churches' core expectations, and importantly, why should that be? Even since Helen left the position has changed, so that all ministers are now involved in a process of supervision, which will take time. So, what is a Minister for?

*Secondly, 'what does it mean to be a church family?'*

If you read Acts 2:42-47 you will find the earliest picture of the primitive church; it has become a template for the church throughout the ages. The New Testament is full of advice about building community, how we should relate to each other, and there is huge stress on the need to be 'one'. So, there is the question 'how well do we know each other?' Are we 'one' or a series of congregations? Do the saints above relate to the saints below? Do those who sit on the right have much to do with those on the left? These may seem simple questions but they have great importance. How well do we know each other and what can we do to enhance our awareness of the others who share our pilgrimage? Or in more simple terms, where do we eat together and have fun together? How do we grow in love and understanding? How, together, do we keep an eye out for the absent or the distressed?

*Thirdly, 'what it is to be a diverse community?'*

I am not sure how many countries are represented in our community, but we have to ask ourselves how well we reflect our diversity. Those who

have not been at AMC all their lives bring a rich history to us., The experience of church in other places needs to inform the way we worship and share together. We need a mechanism by which voices can be heard and opportunities considered, in the hope of building up who we are and so celebrating the richness that is part of us. So, what could we learn from other congregations' ways of being church? How do we seek to make AMC a place where our diversity is seen in who we are?

*And then, given the chance, what else might you say to the church?*

The easiest thing would be for this to become an excuse for a full-blooded whinge about the insignificant, a diatribe about the wrong hymn tune or the welcome stewards' taste in shirts. What ideas do you have? What questions would you like to ask? There is a real importance in building channels of communication to allow, and here is an important word, positive reflections on issues that have importance for folk within our community. To give some examples: I have been asked why I am not at AMC each week, why do the choir sing an introit, through to questions about our response to the homeless and why certain people have certain roles? Where is our place to share, to ask of ourselves in the hope of refining who we are for the better?

So, a conversation, a chance to look closely at who we are and why we do things the way we do? All designed to help us evolve, to find something of the dynamism of the Divine.

**In my diary I have set aside the evening of Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December** to allow a conversation. I will be at church, happy to listen and talk to whoever else wants to come. It would be really helpful, if people had particular thoughts, questions or ideas, to have some advance notice so a pattern can be worked out for the night. The gathering will give opportunity to think, to listen, to share, to build.

I may sit on my own which could be interesting; hopefully though, we can begin a conversation that might change us all for the advancement of the Gospel.

Richard.





## **We all like a clean and tidy church, so read on...**

As some of you may know, a group of volunteers keep the Church and Welcome Space clean. The rota is such that people on it can expect to be asked only twice a year, but this year has put that into question. Two of our volunteers have needed to move on, and to keep it at twice a year we do need to replace them. To do this we need two more volunteers to give two hours on two occasions through the year.

So, can I ask you to consider whether you can help us by joining the rota?

Basically, you would need to

- be able to do light cleaning of the Church (vacuuming, dusting etc)
- be able to offer approx 2 hours every six months

Please don't just leave it to others; our volunteers have so far saved our Church the staggering sum of over **£50,000** since they started.

So, if you have 2-3 hours once in a while to help us all keep our Church clean and fit for use, please either call me as below, or see me after Church on Sunday, **but before the end of November.**

Remember:

***If we all give a little, we all gain a lot***

Kevin Hardern, Senior Property Steward  
01296 481285



## Her Hero

It was a cold, grey, wet day.  
It always seemed to rain at this time,  
This day of Remembrance;  
As if God was weeping for the lost.  
Everyone had been a husband, wife  
A son or daughter.  
But all of them His children.  
Yes. He was weeping.

And so was she, very quietly,  
Bundled up in a too-large coat  
That swaddled her tiny form.  
On her head, was an old battered hat,  
Worn only at this time of year.  
She stood in the shop doorway  
That had been closed for months.  
Waiting for the right time.

She watched as the dignitaries,  
All dressed for the occasion,  
Came and laid down their wreaths.  
The redness of the poppies  
Spreading out like the blood  
That had been innocently shed.  
Some, a long time ago -  
But to her it was yesterday.

Many of the soldiers had medals.  
They seemed far too young to have  
Even been to war, she thought.  
They look just like babies....  
Her heart ached as it always did  
As she remembered her husband.  
He was so handsome, so young.  
Just as they married, he went to war.

She waited daily for his brief letters  
Until they suddenly stopped coming.  
She was told that 'he died a hero',  
Putting others before himself.  
Each November she visits the Cenotaph,  
And when the people have left  
She wanders around the cobbles,  
Picking up the discarded poppies.

She carefully weaves them into a wreath.  
Walking slowly, she painfully climbs  
To the top of the stone memorial,  
And gently lays her wreath.  
As she does, the sun weakly shines  
On the Victoria Cross pinned to her chest.  
Yes, she remembers.....  
He did die a Hero.

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# J TEAM

# MERRY CHRISTMAS

Welcome to the J Team pages

## Jesus brings us the gift of love

This season is the celebration of Jesus Christ's coming and he brings us the greatest gift of all. He brings the gift of God's love. The Bible says, *"But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy."* Yes, he loves us when we're bad or good, what a great love that is! With the tune "Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town", sing the following:

Wipe away your tears, get rid of your fears;  
Here's the best news you've heard in years!  
Jesus Christ is coming to town.

He's makin' a list in the Book of Life,  
That'll be the end of your trouble and strife!  
Jesus Christ is comin' to town.

He loves you when you're sleepin',  
He loves you when you're awake;  
He loves you when you're bad or good,  
But be good for Jesus' sake!

Now put on a smile, get rid of that frown,  
Spread the "Good News" all around;  
Jesus Christ is comin' to town.

Colouring in



Christmas is a time for sharing.  
Sharing time, prayers, fun,  
presents and more.  
How many presents can you find  
on these pages?





## Jesus is Coming to Town!

"She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21

Find the words in the wordsearch below



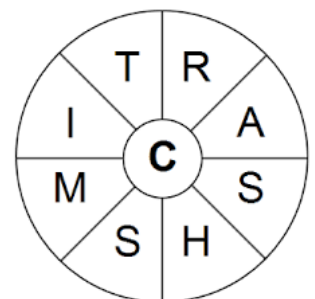
F	J	U	X	J	M	Q	I	M	M	A	N	U	E	L
E	I	U	D	E	R	C	B	Y	O	N	C	Q	Y	Z
T	P	Q	J	S	G	D	J	A	L	A	H	S	B	W
O	S	N	O	U	T	R	K	O	A	M	I	X	V	Q
C	D	X	K	S	E	E	X	S	N	E	L	Q	R	V
P	D	V	I	T	D	A	D	L	G	K	D	B	B	U
I	T	R	O	K	B	M	V	V	E	O	K	V	X	I
F	H	M	A	R	Y	J	T	P	L	C	N	Z	H	Z
C	U	I	K	V	I	O	M	F	Y	V	B	T	H	A
Z	J	R	H	U	S	B	A	N	D	U	R	P	T	N
S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



CHRIST	MARRY	SON	CHILD	BIRTH
JESUS	AFRAID	NAME	JOSEPH	DREAM
VIRGIN	ANGEL	IMMANUEL	HUSBAND	MARY

## Christmas word wheel

How many words can you make out of the letters in the word wheel?



Dear God,  
Thank you for this special time of year. May we remember that through His love we are filled with joy and peace.  
Amen

## 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 friends or family.

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



Your purchase will enable us to continue providing vital help for those most in need. It will make a real and lasting difference—promising them hope for a brighter, happier future.

### **£10 - To feed a child for a whole month.**

This simple gift will supply basic food rations to a child living through disaster, keeping them healthy and nourished while their community recovers.

**£20 - Goats make great gifts.** They provide nourishment for a family and extra income when they are bred and sold. Debby's family received five goats from World Vision in 2013, one male and four females. Her father, Obby, says that World Vision's goats transformed their lives: "God answered our prayers through World Vision. They were big goats. The cross breeding made our traditional goats bigger. They make more money." [www.musthavegifts.org](http://www.musthavegifts.org)

This is a charity gift website that supports the work of Christian Aid. Your gift could transform the lives of people living in poverty around the world.



**£8 – A pair of chickens.** Chickens can give a family food and generate a healthy income. The chicken provides eggs which can be consumed or sold in the market. In Zambia, a chicken could enable someone to set up a business and earn money to buy nutritious food for their family

**£15 - A pack of 5 mosquito nets:** This gift can help protect vulnerable young children from malaria in Nigeria and Democratic Republic of Congo:

- Every 60 seconds, a child dies from malaria in vulnerable areas here
- Mosquito nets, thin as they are, can make a life-or-death difference
- You're buying safety, a better life expectancy and a good night's sleep; and our local partner can supply five long-lasting, insecticide-treated nets to protect sleeping children from deadly mosquito bites.

[charity-gifts.christianaid.org.uk](http://charity-gifts.christianaid.org.uk)

**OXFAM**

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

**£5 – Super Seeds.** Living in poverty, families can struggle to put food on the table and support their loved ones. But the chance to earn a decent income can change everything – and help people to beat poverty for good. That's why Oxfam provides seeds, tools and training for farmers to help them grow more crops, raise more animals and earn more income. It's why we provide pigs and chickens to help them get started. And we help farmers with brilliant, poverty-busting ideas to share with others. Gifts like this one make it all possible. In Rwanda, Oxfam has helped women farmers learn new skills and earn a living growing tree tomato seedlings. Thanks to these little plants, the women have earned enough to improve their homes, install electricity and send their children to school.

**£20 – Education for Girls.** Niger is just one place Oxfam is helping more girls get an education, so people like Nana have the chance to build a better future – one full of possibilities. In Niger, Nana was one of over 700,000 girls who had never been to school. But then she got involved in a reading club, supported by Oxfam, which is changing girls' education for good. Thanks to people like you, Oxfam has provided reading clubs with equipment and support for teachers – so students like Nana can work on improving their reading. Girls are now reading more confidently and have more motivation to keep learning. Clubs hold reading competitions too, so the girls and their parents can see their determination paying off. Thanks to your gift, more girls like Nana will be able to keep learning, and changing their lives for the better.

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

**Good  
Gifts  
Catalogue**

'Good Gifts' introduced a new way of giving. It cut out unwanted gifts and gives practical help to those in need. And lasting pleasure to the person in whose name the gift was given.'

**£10** - Clean water for a school in Africa. Just £10 gives 500 children clean water for a month.

**£32** - Fish out the plastic. The problem: discarded plastic, particularly fishing nets, catch and kill marine life. The Philippines, a paradise for marine diversity, is the third largest contributor to dumped plastic. A solution: pay fishermen to recover nets from the ocean to be turned into carpet tiles. Fisherfolk can earn incomes collecting, and the manufacturing provides jobs

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



### **Karibuni Charity Gifts and cards**

Each Charity Gift represents a tangible, life-changing item that is used in our Kenyan projects. Ranging in price from £5 to £60, choose from a life-changing gift from our range of great presents for friends and family. A Karibuni gift card will be sent by post showing each gift you've bought. Your donation goes where it's most needed, helping to change the lives of children in Kenya for the better. Every gift is acknowledged with a voucher inside one of our Greetings cards, for you to use when sending it to the person for whom you have bought the gift. [www.karibuni.org.uk](http://www.karibuni.org.uk)



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 clean drinking water

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



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

**£10** could help a family like Asefa's in Ethiopia to set up their own honey-selling business. This gift could provide families with training in bee-keeping, helping them to develop a sustainable source of income. What an un-bee-lieveable gift!

**£10** could also provide safe, clean water to a family in rural Zimbabwe. Water difference that makes! All We Can is helping communities by eliminating the need to walk for hours to collect water and protecting families from water-borne diseases like cholera.

**£12** could save the lives of vulnerable children, by supplying a family in Ethiopia with a stove. Traditionally, families cook on open fires inside their homes, meaning that children get sick from inhaling toxic smoke. These safe stoves channel smoke outside, allowing families to cook and eat without the threat of poisonous fumes.

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





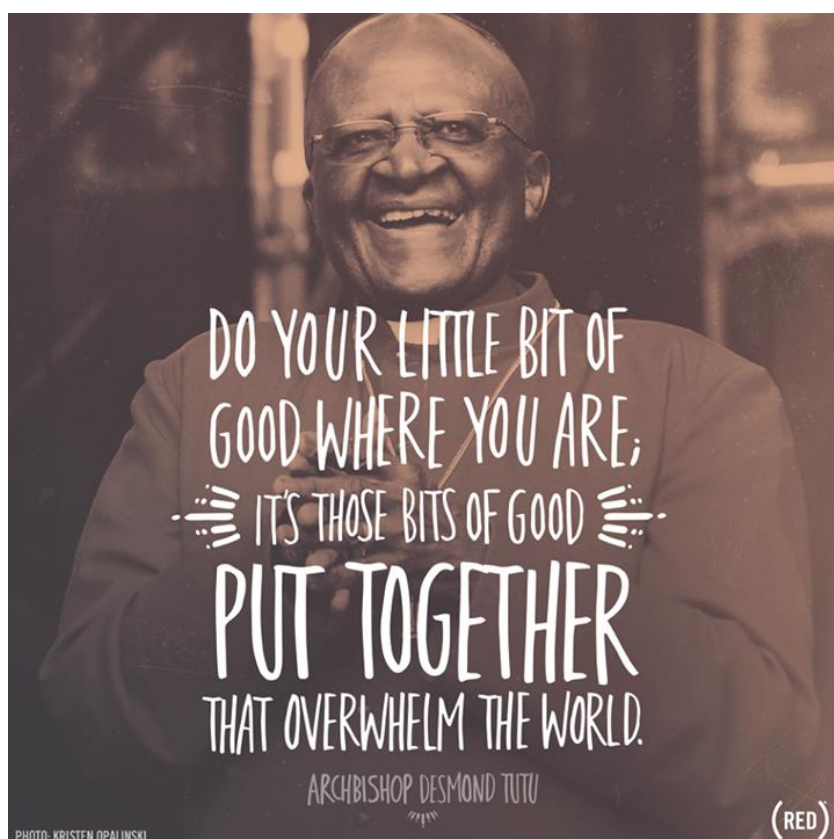
Methodist  
relief and  
development

“Man’s inhumanity to man darkens the record of every century. Yet, by reason of their intensity and magnitude, the refugee problems of the twenty-first century outrange the forced migrations of bygone ages.”

These are the words of Reverend Henry Carter, founder of the organisation to help refugees in the 1930s known as the Methodist Refugee Fund, that would become AllWeCan in 2014. Its focus has changed and evolved over the years, but essentially it is still about helping people to reach their full potential. Working with other local agencies, they work to improve the lives of those who struggle. In recent times they have again focused on refugees by working with the Rohingya women refugees in Cox’s Bazar in Bangladesh.

*One way you can help their work is to buy a gift from their Christmas catalogue; one of these can be found in the vestibule, or ask me, or go online to [info@allwecan.org.uk](mailto:info@allwecan.org.uk)*

Ruth Watkins 01296 485087.



## The Words

Oh dear, what had I said? I could see the tears welling up in Lauren's eyes.

"I'm sorry", I said "I didn't mean to upset you."

"No, it's alright," she gulped. "Please go on with what you are saying."

It was the last night of the holiday, and I was sharing a table in the hotel dining room with this young woman and her parents. I had got to know her Dad on the journey as we had had seats next to each other on the coach.

"Lauren is not saying much," he had said, as his wife handed us sweets, from her place in front of us. "She is in a mood because her boyfriend has dumped her."

"I've gone off tall men," she had declared during dinner on the first night. Although, she had only known this man for a few months, she said she had really thought he was *the one*. She had been introduced to his sister and had met his parents for the first time on the previous Sunday. They had arranged to meet on the Friday evening, when she expected him to arrive home from his work in London. She had booked a table for a meal and they had planned a visit to the cinema. Then he had texted to say that he was delayed. Later he had contacted her again, with apologies. When he did eventually show up, he had given her back her three CDs and said did not want their relationship to continue.

"It's the third time it's happened to her," her father told me, the next morning. "We don't know what keeps going wrong." My heart went out to her. She was thirty and all her friends were getting married. They kept sending her sympathetic messages on her phone, but nothing was helping her.

I asked what work she did. She said she was working in a call centre, answering queries addressed to the Council, but she was not qualified to deal with the problems presented to her. She was simply employed to hand the enquirers on to other people. In spite of this, her job was stressful, because the callers often wanted to pour out all their troubles before she could get a word in edgeways. There was no prospect of promotion for her there, even though she had a Masters degree in English. She was stuck. It seemed very sad to me that her talents were being wasted. I watched her playing with her food, over the next day or two and longed to see her smile.



I remembered how I had once felt, when I came to know that I was in the wrong profession. I also remembered friends who had initially made the wrong career choices but had gone on to find their true forte eventually. I felt strongly that I must help her. I prayed, "Please God give me the right words."

It would have been easy to say nothing. After all, I was on holiday. Her problems were nothing to do with me. Would it be right to barge in and offer advice? I could be told politely to mind my own business. Yet I had this strong urge to speak. If that was the right thing to do, I believed an opportunity to say something would arise and if I failed to take it, I knew I should regret it.

When I was digging into my strawberry meringue, on that last evening, the chance did come. I told her about a personality test, I had once done and how it had helped me. That was when her eyes brimmed with tears. She was interested. I told her that although I had taken a weekend course to learn about it, it is now available on the internet. I had guessed that she, like me, might belong to one of the rarer types and I could see that she was paying rapt attention. I told her how I also found writing very therapeutic and how I had completed a correspondence course on writing. At the end of it, I had sold sufficient samples of my work to recoup the initial outlay. She confided that she had already considered doing a creative writing course. It occurred to me that, with her degree in English, this might be an excellent thing for her to do. She would not even need to change her job to gain some form of fulfilment.

The next morning, she turned to me on the coach and showed me the result of the personality test I had recommended to her. She had done it on line and I was gratified to find that I had accurately predicted the result, although I had not dared to tell her what I had thought it would be. While waiting for the feeder coach, on the way home, she made a point of coming to thank me and tell me how much I had helped her. There was a broad smile on her face.

I don't know if she will become a best-selling novelist, but God had certainly answered my prayer, for I had been given exactly the right words.

Angela M. Smith



## **God in Love Unites Us**

This is a report published by the church, looking at marriage and relationships, and asking questions about whether we should change our understanding and position.

It stems from the government's decision to change the definition of marriage to allow same sex marriages. The report is Methodism using its processes to respond. We are a democratic movement, so for significant possible changes there is always a consultative process, which normally results in what is termed 'provisional legislation', which is what the recommendations at the end of the report are.

It is really important to note that the proposals are not what Methodism wants to do, rather they are something for opinions to be expressed on. In effect, the working group had to proffer something that could be the basis of what could be voted on at Synod and at Conference. The proposals are not fixed; there is the opportunity to amend them by a process that will be advised in November, and which will inform discussions at Synod and Conference level.

In real terms, the proposals in the report could be very different by the time they get to Conference. So please do not assume that the proposals in the report are going to become the Methodist position.

The report and a study guide are on the Methodist Church of Great Britain website along with a study guide. In Circuit, there will be a day looking at the report at Stoke Mandeville on January 13<sup>th</sup>, and there will be an AMC discussion as well at some point. Our legal process does not allow a vote, but a conversation which will inform reflection at Circuit Meeting, where our Synod reps will hear something of the mood of the Circuit

One of the key points made is that we are a people of contradictory convictions; the report does not expect unanimity. Some will see the proposals as a breath of fresh air, others will throw their hands up in horror. However, the real need is to hold together as a community of love; there is much about which we may disagree and we live with that tension

The report is worth reading and I would hope folk would, before deciding their response. I have ordered some paper copies but these have not yet arrived.

**PLEASE** hear the idea that this is something to allow a vote, **not** an indication of intent by the church. It is a response to the fact that the understanding of marriage in law has changed. I am sure amendments will flood in; what will come from this it is difficult to predict. Our real responsibility is to look at this but focus on the key calling of being church - a diverse community bound together by the love of Christ.

Any questions, do ask!  
Richard.



## **Whitechapel Mission**

The Whitechapel Mission has been serving the homeless and marginalised for 143 years – including a day centre, skills training and career advice, activity programmes and specialist support for complex needs. By encouraging each person to address the issues which caused their homelessness, we help them to gain the skills and confidence to make lasting changes in their lives.

Here at AMC we play a small but valued part in the work of the mission, and on behalf of Tony and the staff and clients of Whitechapel Mission, Thank You to all those who contributed in any way to this year's Harvest Appeal. The , although not as great as last year, was a magnificent effort and very much appreciated.

The work of the mission continues to increase with more and younger people in need. There has been a particular increase in the number of young women.

Take a look online to see pictures of the Mission and its work.

**<https://whitechapel.org.uk>**

Ruth and Peter Watkins

# CHRISTMAS SERVICES

## 2019



Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> Dec	10.30am	Gift & Toy Service
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> Dec	5.00pm	Candlelit Carol Service
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> Dec	4.00pm	Christingle Service
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> Dec	11.30pm	Midnight Communion
Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> Dec	10.00am	Christmas Day Family Service – bring a toy or gift to show!



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

NOEL  
ANGEL  
JESUS  
PEACE HOPE  
WISEMEN  
CHRISTMAS  
BELIEVE FAITH  
PRINCE OF PEACE  
THANK YOU

Sat 9 Nov	6.30pm 7.30pm	Alfan Youth Concert Diwali Evening with Lynn & Derek Bernstone
Sun 10 Nov	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Rev Richard Atkinson <b>Remembrance Sunday</b>
Tues 12 Nov	2.30pm	Tuesday Fellowship: Fellowship Afternoon
Sat 16 Nov	All day 7.30pm	Action for Children Stall in Friars Square Karibuni Concert with Wycombe Orpheus Male Voice Choir
Sun 17 Nov	8.45am 10.30am	Service of Holy Communion led by Rev Richard Atkinson Morning Worship led by Mr David Neville
Sat 23 Nov	4.00-6.00pm	Messy Church
Sun 24 Nov	10.30am	Morning Worship led by the Good Faith Book Club
Tues 26 Nov	2.30pm	Tuesday Fellowship: Alison Watkins
Sun 1 Dec	10.30am	Gift & Toy and Brigades Service led by Rev Richard Atkinson
Mon 2 Dec	7.30pm	Meeting to discuss the Spiritual Life of the Church
Sat 7 <sup>th</sup> Dec	10am-4pm	Christmas Tree Festival
Sun 8 Dec	10.30am	Service of Holy Communion led by Rev Richard Atkinson
Tues 12 Dec	2.30pm	Tuesday Fellowship: Carol Service at The Church of the Holy Spirit, Bedgrove
Sat 14 Dec	4.00-6.00pm	Messy Church
Sun 15 Dec	8.45am 10.30am	Service of Holy Communion led by Rev Richard Atkinson Morning Worship led by Mr Ken Harris
Frid 20 Dec	6.00pm	Christmas Youth Ball
Sun 22 Dec	10.30am 5.00pm	Morning Worship led by Rev Richard Atkinson Candlelit Carol Service led by Rev Richard Atkinson
Tues 24 Dec	4.00pm 11.30pm	Christingle Service led by Rev Richard Atkinson Midnight Communion led by Rev Richard Atkinson
Wed 25 Dec	10.00am	Christmas Day Family Service led by Rev Richard Atkinson
Sun 29 Dec	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Mr Arthur Sara
Frid 10 Jan	Articles due in for January-February LINK magazine	
Sat 28 March	6.00pm	Beatie's Charity Bash 2020



## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Our next update, about two more of our young people!

### The Horne Family.

Both Alastair and Caroline sang with the Church choir in their teens, which is something of a family tradition.

**Alastair** did his English degree at Magdalene College, Cambridge, staying on for graduate study culminating in a year as bye-fellow. He was then offered a job in Japan as a 'visiting professor' at Kyushu University in Fukuoka and enjoyed three years teaching there.

On his return, he worked at Cambridge University Press for more than a decade.



Alastair is now doing doctoral research at Bath Spa University and at the British Library, whilst still managing to live in Cambridge. He is also a freelance journalist and lecturer specialising in the publishing industry. He has just had his third book published.

Any spare time is spent on stage singing and acting.

**Caroline** stayed in Girls Brigade until she left to go to university. She was also a Sunday School teacher during that time.

She did her first degree in English and History at Lampeter, Wales, and thoroughly loved her course there, making some lifelong friends.

After working for Bucks libraries for five years, Caroline went to work in the corporate library sector for Baker Tilly in Bloomsbury.

This necessitated moving to London where she spent several years. During this time, she took her Master's in Library Science at City University, gaining a distinction in 2012.





She recently moved to Royal Leamington Spa to be with her fiancé, Matt, and plans are well in hand for their wedding at Aylesbury Methodist Church next June.

Some of the lifelong friends made at Lampeter University will serve as bridesmaids.

Caroline has just started her new job in the library at Warwickshire College.

## **Karibuni Children Autumn Concert**

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2019, 7.30pm**

**at Aylesbury Methodist Church**

### **Wycombe Orpheus Male Voice Choir**



**Tickets £10 each.**

**Order by phone 01296 614887**

**or pay on the door.**



**TransfOrming young  
Kenyan lives.**

Registered UK Charity Number 1044872

# CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

*'Christmas Stories'*



*Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2019*

*10.00am – 4.00pm*

*Aylesbury Methodist Church*

*Buckingham Street*

*Free Admission,*

*but donations welcome!*

*Craft, Cake & Produce Stalls*

*Raffle and Tombola*

*Refreshments available all day,*

*including light lunches*

*All proceeds to our new Church Welcome Space*

# CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

## 'Christmas Stories'

After the last few years' successful Christmas Tree Festivals, plans are well under way for an even bigger and better festival this year. The date is **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December**, with trees to be put up and decorated on the Friday.

Mulled punch and mince pies will be available between 5.00pm and 7.00pm on the Friday!

The Tree Festival will be open to the public on **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December** between 10.00am and 4.00pm, with stalls selling cakes, produce and crafts, along with the Cards for Good Causes Charity Christmas Card Shop.

There will also be a Raffle and Tombola.

Refreshments are being served all day, as well as light lunches.

Contributions for the Stalls, Tombola and Raffle would be gratefully appreciated, as would your help and support on the day.

Please see or phone Gill Marks 01296 748659 or Lynn Bernstone 01296 420817, who will be happy to give you more information.





Our annual QUIZ on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October raised **£537.50!!**  
Thanks so much to Viv and Steve Kemp and to all who came along, and who donated raffle prizes.

### Coming Up!

**Annual Christmas Stall in Friars Square  
on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2019  
with Gifts, Tombola and Children's Lucky Dip**

We would be very grateful for items for the Stall.  
Please give these to: Jennie Torpey 581414,  
Pauline Noble 484940, or Sandie Steeden 331278,  
by Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> November.



**You will see that Action for Children have a new logo!**

**Our annual Toy & Gift Service will be held on December 1<sup>st</sup> at 10.30am.**



This year, all our gifts will be going to the main Family Centre in Aylesbury, which is run by Bucks County Council; from here they will be distributed to families in need who live in Aylesbury and surrounding area. This Centre works with a large number of vulnerable children and teenagers up to age 19, where there is a huge need. They are delighted that we will be able to support them this Christmas.

If you are able, please bring along a new toy or gift for a child or teenager who will otherwise receive very little this Christmas. If you are unable to purchase a gift, a donation in a sealed envelope will also be welcome.

**Please do not wrap your gift, as presents will be individually selected and wrapped by the Centre.**

It is that time of year when we ask all who have an **Action for Children Home Collecting** Box to either bring in the box for us to count the money, or for you to open the box, count and bring in the money in a sealed envelope clearly marked with your name. These boxes are a very valuable source of income for the charity and every penny counts towards helping the most vulnerable children and families under their care. Pauline Noble, Dawn or Hannah Wright will be pleased to receive either your box or the counted money. Any queries ring Pauline on 01296 484940



**Safe and happy childhood**



Action for Children protects and supports children and young people, providing practical and emotional care and support, ensuring their voices are heard, and campaigning to bring lasting improvements to their lives.



## SITUATIONS VACANT

We are looking for:

- Someone to oversee our social media presence. The website, Facebook and Twitter accounts are up and running, as is the live streaming of our services (and the chance to watch recordings of past services). Is there someone who would be willing to look at and improve and enhance this part of our ministry? Please talk to Peter Green or Richard Atkinson.
- Our 'In Touch' team is looking for more folk to be involved. This is the group that is vital to our pastoral work, keeping an eye on the church family. The role is simply to keep in touch with a small group. So, if they come to church this is easy, along with the occasional phone call or visit to those who are less regular or unable to come to church. If you would be willing to help, speak to Pauline Noble or Richard Atkinson.

**The next LINK magazine will be the January-February 2020 issue.**

**Please send in all contributions by Friday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2020 to both addresses below:**

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

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

*Or I can type them up for you if I have them early enough.*



***Ideally, please send as an A4 WORD document, with 2cm margins and 14 - 16pt size font***

It's okay to cry when  
there's too much on  
your mind -

The clouds rain too  
when things get heavy.

-Amina Mehmood



## Amnesty International's 'Write for Rights' Campaign

**1 November – 31 December 2019**

It is such a simple thing to write a card with encouraging words or a letter of support or an appeal on behalf of some-one one has never met. It only takes a few minutes, but **it can make a big difference to someone.**

**This is what two people who Amnesty campaigned for last year said:**

“I want to thank Amnesty globally. The support they gave us is amazing and it makes a lot of difference. The thousands of letters we have received show that this struggle is not just about us, that we are not alone.” **Nonhle Mbuthuma**, land rights defender in South Africa. -

“I am wholeheartedly grateful to all the people around the world who have showered me with compassion and kindness and spared no effort in supporting me.” **Athena Daemi**, Iranian civil rights activist, children's rights activist, human rights activist and political prisoner in Iran.

This year we are asked to take action for 10 young people under the age of 25 across the world, who are having their human rights denied.

The information about the campaign and the cases will be displayed shortly (probably with the Charity Christmas cards and in the hall).

Or do look at their website: [www.amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights)

Detailed instructions, such as whether we can include our name or whether we can/cannot send a religious card, are given in each case *and it is important that we follow these.*

Helpful suggestions for short solidarity messages are also given. *It is important that we do not make any political comments.*



**The fate of Sarah Mardini and Sean Binder is one of the cases.**

They are trained rescuers and volunteered for a search-and-rescue organisation in Lesbos, Greece. Their job was to help spot boats in distress at sea and help refugees. But Sarah and Seán ended up behind bars charged with spying, people smuggling and belonging to a criminal organisation. They spent more than 100 days in prison before being released on bail in December 2018. If found guilty, they could be jailed for 25 years.



**Another case is José Adrián from Mexico.** In February 2016, aged 14 years, he was walking home from school when he stumbled into the aftermath of a fight between a group of youths in which a police car was damaged. Police officers grabbed him and threw him against the car, and one officer stomped on his neck. José Adrián, who has a hearing disability, was the only one to be arrested. The officers did not provide an explanation or contact his parents.

At the police station, José Adrián was handcuffed, hung from a wall and left for what felt like hours. To get him released, his family, who are Indigenous Maya and live in a disadvantaged community, were forced to pay a fine and the costs of repairing the police car – money they could ill afford. José dropped out of school because of the ordeal.

Today, he is back in high school, and he and his family want to move on with their lives. But the authorities have still not provided reparations or brought the officers responsible to justice. Adrian said: “What I want is that they make [the] police better. I don’t want what happened to me to happen to other kids.”

You don’t have to buy a card. If you have cards from last Christmas with a robin, scenery or flowers, you can cut the side with the greetings off and use the part with the picture to send your greetings.



**Thank you for taking part and making a difference to someone.**

(Annelies Varsey).



## Dates for **Messy Church**

Saturdays, monthly

4.00 – 6.00pm

Sat **Nov 23rd** - No Story: Singing and Psalms  
- Making Instruments

Sat **Dec 14th** - Christmas!!!!

### **Any Volunteers?**

Would anyone like to be a part of the amazing  
Messy Church team?

If you would like to get involved and give some time to Messy  
Church, please contact Mel: 07717 121887 or  
[familyworker.amc@mail.com](mailto:familyworker.amc@mail.com)

Messy Church is **WONDERFUL!**

Please get in touch if you would like to get involved.

Thank you!

Aylesbury Methodist Church, Buckingham Street, Aylesbury. HP20 2NQ



Aylesbury Methodist Church  
Buckingham Street, HP20 2NQ

## Youth Group!

From Year 6 upwards!  
Every Wednesday. 6.15 – 7.30pm  
(except school holidays)

1st Wednesday – SINGING



2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday – DRAMA



3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday – DISCUSSION



4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday – SOCIAL



To SIGN UP, please contact Mel  
[familyworker.amc@mail.com](mailto:familyworker.amc@mail.com) Tel: 07717 121887

There's NO weekly charge.  
Just pay £1 on Youth Social nights

# The Star

A  
Star  
Shining  
Brightly  
In the clear night  
Had led the three wise men. They followed the  
Sign from God, and journeyed to Bethlehem  
To Crown a new King. God's Son. Jesus.  
Shepherds were also following  
The mighty star. They  
Brought a new-born lamb.  
It was a long journey, but  
They knew it was very important.  
Suddenly the star stopped over a cattle-shed  
In Bethlehem, and there lay Jesus in a manger.  
The Messiah had  
Indeed been  
Born.  
X

Mary and Joseph were very tired from their long trek, but they knew that God was with them, even when they could not find a room for Mary to give birth in. A cattle stall was all that was offered, but they knew everything would be fine and it was - because they had great faith that God had not left them.

When we are in great difficulty and feel so very alone, all we need to do is ask God for His awesome help. He gives us His Love and Peace unconditionally.

# memories

*"Dropping, dropping, dropping, dropping, hear the pennies fall.*

*Every one for Jesus. He shall have them all."*

If you remember singing this song as you put your penny into the Sunday School collecting box, then probably you were a child growing up in the Methodist Church during the 1960s or perhaps before. After all, the song first saw the light of day in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

I went from pre-school to teenager during the 1960s, and as my father was a Methodist minister, I spent a fair amount of time around the Methodist Church – in my case in Sheffield and Chesterfield.

I have memories of various activities from those times – Sunday School Anniversary, nativity plays, Christmas bazaar, youth club and so on.

I am inviting you to remember those times too, and pass your memories on to me. If there is enough interest, I hope to put an article in a future Link magazine.

You can email me [patstarr0801@btinternet.com](mailto:patstarr0801@btinternet.com) or if you prefer just write some notes and pass them to me when you see me at Church!

Thank you.

Pat Starr

## word needles

I  
wrote  
a poem  
in the shape  
of a Christmas  
tree but then forgot  
to water it and then a few  
days  
later  
there  
were words  
all over  
the  
carpet

**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 perhaps 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 Children (Joy Murphy)

Missions (John Miskin)

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  
Cards & Gifts on sale.**

**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!***





## Buy Your Own Gift

Last Christmas, grandpa was feeling his age and found that shopping for Christmas gifts had become too difficult. So he decided to send cheques to everyone instead.

In each card he wrote, "Buy your own present!" and posted them early.

He enjoyed the usual flurry of family festivities, and it was only after the holiday that he noticed that he had received very few cards in return. Puzzled over this, he went into his study, intending to write to a couple of his relatives and ask what had happened. It was then, as he cleared off his cluttered desk, that he got his answer. Under a stack of papers, he was horrified to find the gift cheques which he had forgotten to enclose with the cards!!

*By: Christine Doheny for FaveCrafts.com*



## Christmas Walnut Crescents

### Ingredients

1 cup soft butter  
1 cup icing sugar  
2 tsp. vanilla  
1/4 tsp. salt  
1 cup chopped walnuts  
1 3/4 cup flour

### Method

Chill dough for 1 hour. Divide into 8 pieces. Roll into 1/2" rolls. Cut in 2" lengths. Taper ends & shape into crescents. Bake for 15 minutes at 300F.  
[Yield - 4 dozen]



## Misheard lyrics

When my niece was a student, her class of six-year-olds sang 'Hark, the Herald Angels Sing at a Christmas concert. The line "God and sinners reconciled" was a tricky one for this age group.

One little boy, with a voice that completely drowned out the rest of the choir, happily belted out, "God and sinners dressed in style!"

*Jessie Robertson, Williams Lake, B.C.*

***You're invited to our***

# **Christmas Youth Ball**

**For ages 12–21**

**COST: £12:50. Smart Dress.** Dinner, music, dancing and lots of fun!

To book contact Mel Brown: [familyworker.amc@mail.com](mailto:familyworker.amc@mail.com) / 01296 426526

**Also contact: Hannah, Charlie or Ruby**

***Friday  
December  
20th***

***6:00pm-  
9:30pm***

**Aylesbury Methodist  
Church Buckingham  
Street  
HP20 2NQ**



## Are you a 'me first' person?

*'In humility value others above yourselves.'*  
Philippians 2:3 NIV

If you're a 'me first' person, here are some verses of Scripture that are designed to keep you on your toes, and your knees! 'Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility, value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but...to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus' (Philippians 2:3-5).

That's how Jesus treated people, and you have been called to do likewise. Is doing this easy or convenient? No, it runs contrary to everything in our self-centred natures. And because you were gracious yesterday, is no guarantee you'll treat people the same way today.

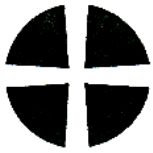
Grace is like a garment; you have to put it on each morning and wear it all day. 'How can I live like that?' you ask. By drawing daily on God's grace, and deciding to put others first. By looking for ways to support and encourage them.

Everybody you meet is fighting a battle of some kind, and you may be the one person that crosses their path who is able to speak a word of encouragement to them (see Proverbs 16:24). Don't let them down.

Humility is an attitude that determines ahead of time: 'I care about the people around me. I don't always have to be first. I'm going to help somebody else win for a change.'

Humility prays, 'Lord, teach me to curb my competitive nature and turn that energy into loving and lifting others. Show me how *You* did it, and help me to do it too.'

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.



***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,  
Reflections on the events, together with traditional Christmas  
Carols and participation by the children of the Junior Church.*

*Presented by the musicians and other members of the church,*

***Led by the Rev Richard Atkinson***

***Sunday 22nd DECEMBER 2019***

***at 5.00 pm***

***A WARM WELCOME IS EXTENDED***  
***TO EVERYONE.***