

The Link Magazine

***December 2018
& January 2019***

Minister: Revd Robert Creamer
Tel: 0113 2645831
robertcreamer@yahoo.com

Editor: Stan Pearson
Tel: 0113 2736463
sbpearson@gmail.com

MINSTER'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

If someone asked where they should go to search for God, what would you say? You might suggest that God can be found in the tranquillity of a peaceful lakeside scene, or in the beauty of autumnal colours that are all around us at the moment, or in the clever and sophisticated theological arguments.

We turn our thoughts, prayers and vision to preparing for Christmas in the season of Advent. We are reminded and surprised by the Christmas stories to find God coming to us in the most unexpected and inhospitable places imaginable. The narratives of the birth of Jesus in a stable at Bethlehem tell us of a God who is to be found, not in only in tranquillity and beauty, but also in the context of inhospitable squalor and political oppression. As the Gospel writer John describes it in his "prologue", it is like Light coming into Darkness. (John 1:1-14)

We are invited by the Christmas stories to visit that "Light in Darkness" ourselves. Just as the smelly shepherds on the hillside went to find the manger scene, and the wise men from the East were prepared to travel a great distance and endure many discomforts on the way, we too can make our journey through Advent to that place of God's self-revelation.

However, for those who feel that their travelling days are done, the Christmas stories also tell of Anna and Simeon, who waited

patiently to see the promised Messiah. Those two figures remind us of the need to keep ourselves watchful and waiting to see how God comes into our very midst, often in complete vulnerability.

Advent is a time to keep alert, watchful and waiting, to discover God's light in our darkness, amidst the frenetic busyness and consumerism that we will all get caught up with at this time of year.

Happy Advent Journeying! Love and Peace,

Robert

WORSHIP IN DECEMBER AND JANUARY

2nd Dec	10.30.am	Revd Dr Neil Richardson <i>Gift Service</i>
9th Dec	10.30 am	Revd Robert Creamer <i>Holy Communion</i>
16th Dec	3.00 pm	Revd Robert Creamer <i>Carol Service</i>
23rd Dec	10.30 am	Revd Robert Creamer
25th Dec	10.00 am	Revd Robert Creamer <i>Christmas Day</i>
30th Dec	10.30 am	Mr Peter Harper
6th Jan	10.30 am	Mrs Patricia Davies
13th Jan	10.30 am	Revd Robert Creamer <i>Covenant Service</i>
20th Jan	10.00 am	<i>Ecumenical service St Edmund's Church</i>
27th Jan	10.30 am	Revd Phil Chilvers

Carols Round the Cradle Christmas Eve 4.30 pm
Mrs Patricia Davies

BIBLE READING NOTES

The list for ordering ***Fresh from the Word*** is now on the notice board. The price is £9.95 for a whole year's Bible reading (one to each day plus prayers etc).

Please contact me if you have any questions. ***Hazel Rayner***

PRAYER FOR CHANGE

The prayer for change is printed also in the magazines of our ecumenical partners, St Andrew's and St Edmund's Churches.

“In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God..... to a virgin.....The virgin's name was Mary.”

As Mary received this news and was “perplexed” we think of the many pregnant women across the world in different situations receiving this news. Excited, devastated, living in war torn countries, living through famine, in comfort, in fear.

Emmanuel - God with us

“In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. All went to their own towns...to the city of David called Bethlehem....He (Joseph) went to be registered with Mary...”

As Mary and Joseph had to make their way to a foreign place, so today many pregnant women are journeying due to government dictate, escaping persecution, being forced to leave their homes. We think of the women of Syria, Central America, Yemen, the streets of Leeds.

Emmanuel – God with us

“While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birthand laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.”

So many mothers give birth in inappropriate places, in danger, in captivity, on the road, without a home, in fear, alone.

Emmanuel – God with us

Every child is a child of God.

Be with every mother and child this Christmas.

Amen

THURSDAY QUIET TIME

This is a reminder that the weekly Quiet Time restarted on Nov 8th after a break for the summer. It is on a Thursday morning at 10.00 am and meets in the chancel area of the church. It is for anyone who likes a quieter, more reflective time and lasts for 30 mins. followed by coffee if wanted. Once a month it includes a service of Holy Communion. There is a rota on the notice board for anyone who feels able to take a turn leading one of the sessions.

THOUGHTS FROM A HOUSE GROUP

The Thursday house group now meets on a Tuesday evening. This clashes less with people's other commitments and other activities that use the premises. We meet every other week at Shadwell Methodist Church. So, we need to change the name to the Tuesday House Group.

We have continued our study of the psalms, finishing the York Course with Psalm 127, perhaps best known for its opening lines, *"Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain"*. Most of us will have been to Leeds Town Hall and this is one of the quotations displayed around the auditorium.

A number of questions arise. Should we leave everything in the hands of God as a matter of faith? This was one question posed early on in the study but seems to be pushing things. Rather, it seemed to us that the proper motive for our activities is the message we are trying to give about God. We work in partnership with God to further his work in the world. God is the foundation of all that we do and, as in the parable of the two houses built on rock and on sand, we need to have this proper foundation if the work is to endure.

However, there are a number of spin offs from this. We do need to be prepared to leave things in God's hands when we have done all we can. We also need to beware of the human tendency to allow

our anxieties to take over and dictate our actions and recognise when these are getting in the way. The modern world is full of stress and distractions and in our lives and in the life of the Church working with God should also mean we take time to put distractions and worries to one side so that we can reflect on what God would have us do.

Our next course is entitled “Glimpses of God: hope for today’s world.” Come and join us if you think it sounds interesting.

Stan Pearson

PROJECT NEWS DECEMBER 2018

As I write this, our new recipe book “Winter Warmers” has just been sent to the printers. The book will be on sale at the December Coffee Morning and all days after that and we do hope that as many of you as possible will purchase a copy, or copies! We have sections on soups, mains and puddings so plenty to try out over the winter months – and a nice present for family and friends. We are grateful to all those who submitted recipes and hope that it will be another best-seller.

At the November Coffee Morning, the Project group offered a brunch from 11 – 1 and we were delighted with the response to that. We were also grateful that Haydn Dalton, in his wisdom, decided to ignore our order for 36 sausages and bring 80. At the end of the morning, he was left with only 8 sausages so we know that “ I told you so” was on his lips even though unspoken! We also served 20 baked potatoes with fillings.

The December concert by the Wendel Singers and the YEP Brass Ensemble promise to be the usual pre-Christmas treat and we look forward to seeing you there.

Following on from that, in January, we are having a lunch after morning service on January 13th to combat the January blues!

I have an amendment to make to our March Early Bird “Pot Pourri” event of food from various countries. The date should be Saturday March 23rd and not 24th.

The Summer Swing Dance at the Queen’s Hall has now been booked for Saturday July 6th so another date to pop in your diaries!

Your continuing support of all our events is always appreciated and we hope that we continue to offer an enjoyable variety. If there is anything you would like to suggest, do please have a word with one of us.

Thank you.

Margaret Farrar on behalf of the Project Group

GIFT AID SERVICE 2ND DECEMBER

The Gift Aid Service this year is on behalf of The Bankside Project which runs antenatal and postnatal “drop ins” for refugee, asylum seeking and migrant women at Bankside Children Centre as part of their work as NCT practitioners.

They offer opportunities to make something practical, for example feeding cushions and heat packs, to explore options for birth in a UK setting, to explore infant feeding and postnatal life, including navigating health care systems,

baby development and baby massage. Alongside this they organise trips as often as they can, often to the Yorkshire Dales, so women and their families can experience a wider sense of what the UK is like and to give children exciting and interesting experiences.

Fran Bailey says, “Thank you so much for supporting us this Christmas. Your gifts will help us pay for sewing materials, for bus passes for women who could not otherwise be able to reach us and to support us in taking groups on trips. We are very grateful.”



SHELTER FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS FEBRUARY 2019

The Leeds General Purposes Fund

Application for funding in support of asylum seekers whom St Andrew's Roundhay is hosting in February 2019.

St Andrews has hosted asylum seekers for the previous two years under the WYDAN [West Yorkshire Destitute Asylum Network], which is a charity. Year on year numbers of asylum seekers have increased. In 2018 the shelter was full with 10 asylum seekers at any one time. More people needed the shelter. Being involved in this project sends a clear message to the community that we as a church are concerned about the wider world, the homeless and displaced and are not just concerned with ourselves. We are also drawing in volunteers of all ages from the wider community who are not necessarily churchgoers.

Hosting is for one week, from Monday 5pm to the following Monday after breakfast. Beds and bed linen for the asylum seekers is moved from venue to venue.

Volunteers greet guests, make three meals each day, launder bed linen from the previous week and any personal washing there may be, socialise with asylum seekers in the evening, and stay awake throughout the night for safety reasons. Guests leave after breakfast and return at 5pm generally. The building is in use 24/7 during the week and is constantly heated.

Our funding request is for further support for the asylum seekers as each needs a bus pass for the week. Guests use the bus network as they have appointments to keep and people to see. A weekly bus pass cost £16 per person at the last shelter in February 2018.

As well as transport we are seeking support to enable volunteer cooks to be reimbursed by a nominal amount as both guests and hosts sit together for the evening and morning meals, meaning there could be 15 people for the evening meal.

Additional shopping is for eggs, juice, cereals, fruit, bread, sandwich fillings, biscuits and cake.

Direct cost to the church for extra heating is estimated at £200.00

St Andrews is seeking a grant of £300 For Transport, a token amount towards evening meals and lunch and laundry. Last year our involvement in this project came to the attention of local councillors who donated £300 mice money, which went towards funding our week. There are other churches involved in this project in our ward that will be able to seek mice money this year.

Carol Fearn, Lead volunteer for ST Andrews night shelter.

This is a project which also involves several of our members at Lidgett. Ed.

FOR A FEW STARS MORE

Michael Bower's piece, "My early Days in Methodism" in the October 2018 Link got me thinking of my own very early days attending a Methodist Church.

I cannot compete with hearing/meeting the likes of Sangster, Soper and Weatherhead, but Saturday church socials only got going when our minister, Rev. John W. Jackson, returned from home games at Elland Road. Rev. Jackson was chaplain at Leeds United so I can say that I have shaken the hand that has shaken the hands of some decent footballers.

My story starts in 1950 when the Watson family decamped from Lupton Avenue to the other side of Harehills Lane. Being safety conscious it was thought prudent that I should, at under 10, be safer not crossing such a main road to attend Harehills Lane Methodist Church (HLMC). In those days if half a dozen cars passed along Harehills Lane in the fifteen minutes' walk on a Sunday morning it was congested!

I could, however, walk near the entrance to Harehills Cemetery and cross the end of Harehills Park (quite lonely early Sunday mornings) to attend St Cyprian's C.o.E. Sunday School. I started at St

Cyprian's about April 1950 and had a good attendance record to the end of that year. Attendances were recorded by stamping an attendance card with a star.



At the end of the year prizes for attendance were given out. Unfortunately, the basis for a prize was a 2/3rds attendance record through the full year which even an 8-

year-old could see required a 34 plus attendance. As I had 35 stars from a 9-month period I felt very miffed when I did not get a prize as, in my eyes, I had the qualifying number. Rules, however, are rules and prizes were only awarded for attendances over a full year.

From school friends, I heard that HLMC had a similar star card attendance system so, getting permission to cross the 'busy' road and without transfer fee, I took my coppers of collection to HLMC.

I assume that a number of the congregation can remember that stars were not only a feature of Sunday School attendance but were rewarded with Saturday morning visits to the ABC Minors (Flash Gordon, Lone Ranger, Laurel and Hardy et al.) Collect 20 (I think) stars and you were entitled to free entry on Saturday. Looking back getting miffed was a mild emotion to go through to be introduced into the Methodist family. From 2 or 3 Sunday attendances each week and through various weekday and weekend activities – who can forget the rather formidable ladies (at that time) from the Bright Hour who 'insisted' that you joined in the dancing (Gay Gordons any one?) at Saturday socials – the Church was the hub of social life within what was regarded as a relatively poor community.

Checking on the history of the now demolished HLMC in ‘Worship – North and East of Leeds’ by John Gilleghan, I began to think that my early years were a dream. St Cyprian’s, Ashley Road Methodists, Harehills Lane Baptists, Trinity Wesleyan Methodists and Gipton Methodist Church are all mentioned but there is no entry for HLMC (or I couldn’t find it). However, a commemorative booklet for the 60th Anniversary (1966) of the founding of HLMC reinforced my memory so I may have a few more years before the Care Home beckons!

Having digressed from the initial reason for ‘crossing the Lane’, I am able to report that the bottom shelf of a bookcase contains five Sunday School attendance prizes and two Scripture Exam prizes in the six-year period to the end of Sunday School and entry to Youth Fellowship. I wonder what the last 68 years would have been like if a rule had been slightly bent? Incidentally, Maureen lived at the ‘right’ side of Harehills Lane – no dodging traffic for her.

Having referred to the 60th Anniversary Booklet for HLMC, the booklet contains a number of items which may be of interest:

Buildings.

Both LPMC and HLMC were built in two stages. At Harehills the main hall and ancillary facilities were opened in 1906 and the Church in 1932. 110 children on Primary Department Roll. At Lidgett the early church buildings were opened in 1905 and the present church 1926.

Organ.

At Harehills the organ was not dedicated until 1935 when the £700 was raised for its purchase and installation. At Lidgett the organ is currently insured for a figure in excess of £420k

Membership

At Harehills in 1966 membership was recorded as ‘153 with others joining our members in service’.

Harehills closed in the late 1980s (probably being demolished for housing when John Gilleghan published his book.)

Also within the booklet is a paragraph written by the Rev G.E. Diggle (Superintendent Minister of the Leeds, Richmond Hill Circuit) which could be quite relevant to today's churches. I repeat it in full. *"Since then [1906] we have suffered two world wars, with a period of economic depression between them. Now we are living in the affluent society – with never so many distractions and counter attractions to worship. Yet, in spite of all these unprecedented trials and difficulties, the Harehills Lane Society continues in good numbers and in good heart, meeting the challenge of our affluent society bravely and vigorously as the men and women of 1906 met the challenge of their materially much poorer times."*

Colin Watson

DREAMING OF SUMMER HOLIDAYS?

As we grapple with the onset of winter Michael has been remembering summer holidays. Ed.

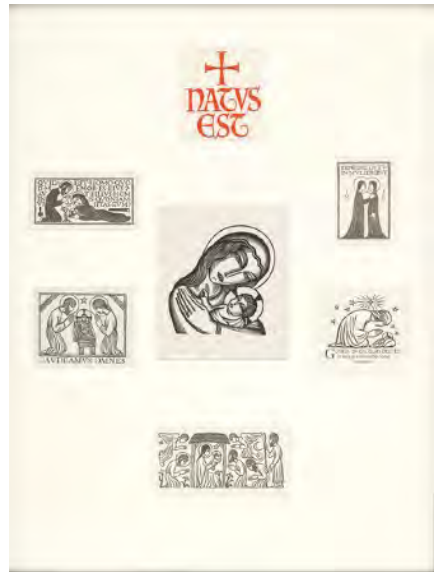
Having read with interest, tales of trips around the world, we recalled tales of our own whiz round the planet when I retired, at the 'turn of the century!' In Fiji we stayed on Mana Island. We were taken to an impressive room with verandah, garden down to a beach, and a scenic view to another island on the horizon. We had viewed the room then gone for a walk and on our return decided on 'a rest before dinner' and were about to leap(!) onto the bed, when the quilt pattern moved. Man of action turned to stone (fear) and Joan decided the object was to be removed. She reasoned it was too big to bash (a) it would make a mess, and (b) it might fight back. So we hastily wrapped it in the quilt, rushed outside and deposited it in the garden—hoping it would not return! It chose not too.

On the Sunday we went to Church with a South African doctor and New Zealand nurse, (or was it a South African nurse and a New Zealand doctor). The service was explained to us - in detail - then began with a prayer. The gentleman leading prayed for his church, the island, the Pacific Rim, the world even. We were glad we had not attempted to sit cross legged on the floor as the rest of the congregation did. The sermon was equally lengthy, but had been reviewed in our pre-service explanation. The puddles, which we avoided, and the bites on the way back to our lodge, which stayed with us for a few days, made it a memorable occasion.

Michael Bowers



Dalit Madonna
A Picture by Jyoti Sahi
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He is Born.
A Picture by Philip
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This year's charity appeal is to support Lidgett Park Church in a refurbishment programme to open up the main entrance to the church and make it more welcoming. We are also raising money for Oasis Relief Zambia and Sreepur Village, Bangladesh.

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Messiah at St Aidan's Church Roundhay Road

Every year the Harrogate Choral Society sings *Handel's Messiah* in the run up to Christmas in The Royal Hall in Harrogate. This year they are also singing in St Aidan's Church, Roundhay Road in Leeds on Friday 7 December 2018 starting at 7.30 pm. It is a large choir, over 100 singers, who work with very good soloists. If you enjoy choral music why not come and listen, whether you have heard *Messiah* before or this is the first time. St Aidan's Church is worth a visit in its own right, a must-see building. Tickets are £10. You can buy them online, or pay at the door. Seating is unreserved so get there early!

JESUS' ONE-LINERS – 2

The Kingdom of God is like yeast, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, until it was all leavened.

Matthew 13.33

The picture painted by Jesus in this short sentence would have been very familiar to everyone living at the time. In fact, it was a daily occupation – the baking of bread. For most of **us** in the 21st century, however, it is an unfamiliar picture – we buy our bread (sliced or unsliced) in Cooplands, Greggs or our local supermarket.

This one-liner of Jesus clearly shows his method of teaching. He begins with a scene or activity that all his hearers would be familiar with, and uses it to lead them to think about, and reflect on, things that they had never, perhaps, seriously considered before. However, in this particular one-liner Jesus' listeners may have been not only perplexed, but shocked. Why? The reason is that Jesus was comparing the Kingdom of God with yeast, and as every Jewish person knew, yeast stood for rotteness and evil. One of the necessary preparations for the Festival of Passover was to ensure that every bit of yeast in the house was destroyed. So why did Jesus use the simile of yeast in this particular parable? Perhaps it was to make sure that his hearers remembered the saying for, as we all know, we tend to remember more vividly those things which have shocked or hurt us.

Yeast has the power to change and transform the substance into which it is placed. In addition it works silently, unobtrusively. It does not have to advertise its presence. So, as the introduction of the yeast into the dough results in bread that is soft and good to eat, in a similar manner the coming of the Kingdom of God should result in a transformation in how we live, both for the individual and for wider Society.

So what was Jesus telling his listeners and, by extension, us? I think he was telling them that, like yeast, they could work quietly

and unobtrusively within their local community (the 3 measures of meal) and do their little bit to change it. By the same token, we are challenged. Are we prepared, like yeast, to be introduced into the 'dough' of our local community and help mitigate some of its problems? Our answer, as followers of Jesus, must be YES. But in what ways? Only we can decide, within the constraints of our own personal situations, what it is practically possible for us to do.

Where should we attempt to focus our help? Jesus, in his teaching and actions, focussed on the needy, the elderly, the marginalised – all of whom tended to be treated as chattels or worse in the Jewish and Roman patriarchal society of his day. Perhaps that is a good place for us to continue to focus on, as well.

Gerry Leake

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

As we approach Christmas we all look forward to a time of celebration with presents and good food shared with those close to us. In the Times today (8th November) there are a series of articles about the impact of Universal Credit and the current discontent among politicians of all persuasions about the way in which this is being implemented. In particular, I was struck by an article reporting the views of Anne Longfield, the Children's Commissioner, who claims that from a child's perspective the effects of the changes constitute a moral wrong. It is children, not pensioners, who are now the most likely to be in poverty. Children have no vote and their plight is in danger of being overlooked.

Benefit payments under Universal Credit no longer go to the mother or the carer but now they will go to the wage earner. The mother is usually responsible for the day to day running of the family and children's budget and so this is an important change which carries with it the risk of making children more vulnerable. Furthermore, the two-child policy which caps benefits for larger

families endangers younger children. A child can't chose its birth order or number of siblings and it is a moral wrong, she says, to make a child worse off through no fault of its own. All these problems are compounded for children in homes where there is domestic abuse or alcohol or drug addiction.

Another important problem she highlights is the long wait for the first payment. Very few families can go several weeks without payment and the result is hunger and recourse to food banks. For every thousand claimants there is only one case worker and a fifth of what is planned to be spent on prestige projects such as HS2 could solve the problem. Childhood poverty severely restricts life's opportunities and the consequences are carried for life. As we celebrate the birth of Jesus we need to remember the deprivation and problems faced by these children.

Stan Pearson

CHILDREN AT LIDGETT PARK

In the coming year, it would be good if we could all rejoice in the growth and development of the children and pray for them as they develop their different skills and abilities. We can also pray for the leaders of each group as they guide and encourage those in their care. We could pray for them on the days they are meeting and pray for **Playcentre** and **Candystripe** on Wednesdays as no other children's group meets then.

Junior Church meets on **Sunday** morning after a brief time in church. Through story, activity and prayer they learn more about God and how we all aim to follow the way of Jesus.

Candystripe look after children from about 6 to 11 years before and after school each day during term time. There are many activities for them as well as some quiet space. There is also a variety of food for those who are "starving" at the end of school. Jean and Andrea are two of their leaders.

Playcentre runs on Mondays and Tuesday from 9 until 3 and on Wednesdays from 9 until 12. Jeannette heads a team of helpers who run this structured “offsted” pre-school nursery of 2 to 4 year olds. This was started by Lorna Crawford in 1964 and taken over by Jeanette in 1998. Their many activities help them to learn through play and socialise together.

Music Bugs meet on **Monday** mornings with Becky. Mums with children aged 6 months to 2 years join together with action songs and dancing to music, with the opportunity to explore and develop in a stimulating environment.

Brownies This pack is affiliated to Lidgett Park and meets on **Mondays** with Lyndsay and her team. Aged 7 to 11 years, they learn new skills as they work towards gaining their badges and they learn how to co-operate with one another.

Explorer Scouts aged 14-18 are affiliated to St. Edmund's and also meet on **Mondays** in the Scout Hut with Jo-Ann. They have fun indoors and outdoors, co-operating with others and making friends. Their activities have a strong spiritual base and a respect for others and the world.

Cre8 meet on **Tuesday** mornings with Ceri. This is music and drama for under 5s. They have lots of fun dressing up.

Rainbows aged 4 to 6 meet on **Tuesdays** with Lee and her team and are affiliated to St. Edmund's. They learn about belief, being kind and co-operating with one another.

Scouts aged 10-14 meet on **Tuesdays** in the Scout Hut with Stephen Milway and his team and are also affiliated to St. Edmund's. They enjoy camping, adventure and teamwork. They learn navigating, orienteering and mapwork skills. Next month they will celebrate Black History month.

Toddlers @ Lidgett meet on **Thursday** mornings. Children from babies to 4 year olds come with mums, dads, grannies or carers. The children have freedom to play on equipment, do some prepared craftwork, socialise and enjoy drinks, fruit and biscuits. It is a welcome time for adults to socialise as well and make new friends. Beginning this month, about a dozen women from the church are helping to run this group.

Socatots runs many classes on Thursday afternoons, **Friday** mornings and **Saturday** mornings for 3 to 5 year olds. Liam and his team have lots of fun with the children as they learn new ball skills and learn to co-operate as a team.

Not just on Sundays but from Monday to Saturday there is a lot of life going on in our buildings. We pray for God's blessing on the children and their leaders as this important work continues.

SOME THOUGHTS ON CONTENTMENT

For I have learned to be content with whatever I have. I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

Philippians 4.11-13

Nobody who gets enough food and clothing in a world where most are hungry and cold has any business to talk about 'misery'.
C S Lewis

Those who face that which is actually before them, unburdened by the past, undistracted by the future, these are they who live, who make the best use of their lives; these are they who have found the secret of contentment.

Alban Goodier SJ

LIDGETT PARK LADIES' GROUP

Here are the next few meetings, held usually at 7.45pm in the Community Hall on alternate Thursday evenings. We look forward to welcoming you to these. There is a small fee of £3, to cover Speakers' and refreshment costs.

6th Dec. Our Carol Service - OPEN to all. Please note an earlier time than usual of 7.30 pm. No fee for this, but perhaps a donation to Martin House Hospice, President Ruth Albiges' choice of charity. Our organist, David Wilks, and the Lidgett Singers, have kindly agreed to come and perform for us again. Please come and join us at what someone called a very 'homely' service.

3rd Jan. Kath Harwood is coming to entertain us with her one-woman show "The 12 Days of Christmas".

17th Jan. New Year Lunch - to be arranged. Probably the same venue as the Annual Lunch last June.

31st Jan. Andrew Stokes bringing his talk on "Suffragettes".

And it only remains for Anne and myself to wish you all a lovely Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Lynne

SHADWELL METHODIST CHURCH *Cafe Morning 10.00 am - 12.30 pm*

18th December

Xmas Treats

There will also be the usual wide range of delicious home-baked cakes and scones and a variety of styles of coffee.

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