

December 2013
& January 2014

Hanham Methodist Church



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Hanham Methodist Church Magazine

The Hanham Methodist Church Magazine is the monthly Magazine of Hanham Methodist Church, in the Bristol & South Gloucestershire Circuit of the Methodist Church. Opinions expressed in some articles are those of the author of the article and do not necessarily reflect Church Policy. All enquiries need to be directed to the minister.

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Articles for the next magazine should be submitted by:- **19 January**

Copies of this magazine are placed on the Church Web-site and therefore the details in all articles will be subject to on line search-engines. Submissions of all articles should therefore highlight any information you do not wish to be accessible to the World Wide Web. Such information will then appear in the paper copies only.

We welcome all people to our church; you don't need to be a member to attend our worship.

Worship at Hanham Methodist Church

Worship at Hanham is traditional Methodist, in an informal and welcoming style. Hymn singing is led by our traditional pipe organ and we have a loop system for those who are hard of hearing. Notices, Service Sheets and the Church Magazine are all available in larger print and Services on CD are available for the housebound.

Everyone will be most welcome at any of our services.

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Word from the Minister

Dear Friends

An angel said to them 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the City of David a Saviour has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord. Luke 2 vv 10-11

Christmas Starts with Christ is the strapline this year for the annual national advertising campaign organized by Churches and Christian Agencies across the United Kingdom. And interestingly this year Bristol has been targeted as one of the key cities meaning that all around the city you should find billboards emphasizing this message.

It is of course a message that reminds us that whilst there are many things we enjoy about Christmas from a Christmas Meal with family and friends to decorating the tree to opening presents and singing carols none of this would have been possible but for what happened in the small then unknown village of Bethlehem just over 2000 years ago. For there as witnessed by humble hill shepherds in what was probably a cave that doubled as a stable to winter some animals a young couple with little money to spare and struggling to make ends meet welcomed into the world their son whom God had named to them also as his own.

This was the miracle of incarnation, of 'God become a Man', what Charles Wesley in one of his several hymns written for the season described as ... **'Our God contracted to a span incomprehensibly made man'**. Here was God in human flesh and bone vulnerable to the uncertainties of the world as much as ourselves. Here was God truly Immanuel which means 'God with us'. Here was God in Christ come to tread the same path as we and in so doing to go before us. Here was God sharing our human life making our salvation possible. The incarnation reminds us we are never alone. We have a God who has walked in our shoes and one who can help us as the hymn affirms through all the changing scenes of life. In addition we recognize in the words of one of the Early Church Fathers that **'Christ became like us that we might become like Him'**, in other words we might in following him embrace with him that life which is good and true, that life which is marked by holiness and grace.

Yes, Christmas starts with Christ, and this is why we must speak by our words and our actions of its true meaning to our families, neighbours and friends and give space amidst the festivities for opportunity ourselves to give thanks in worship, in prayer and in song both in private and public devotion. So let us indeed give thanks that **'Cradled in a manger meanly lay the Son of Man his head'**. He comes to save and to liberate, to heal and to bring peace, to lift up the broken hearted, to give life in all its fullness and to lead us from darkness to light. And most precious of all He who is born for us and whose birth marks the true start of Christmas is the one that can give us all a new start in life if we but open our hearts to receive him in as Lord and Saviour.

Mindful of such things I therefore very much look forward to sharing and celebrating Christmas with you. And please also do not forget the Covenant Service on January 6th as we join with Methodists since 1755 in committing ourselves anew to God at the beginning of a New Year. We also hold in our thoughts especially at this time of year members of our Church and wider community who are housebound, those who are unwell or in hospital, those who have been recently bereaved and all who have need of our prayers. We have hope and peace in the love that binds us and in the Saviour who is born for us. I thank you for your support through 2013 and pray that you with me this sacred season may know the hope and the peace that Christ gives. For unto us and for the world a child is born – Immanuel – God with us! Let our voices be raised in thanksgiving and let us insure that we proclaim to the world that **'Christmas starts with Christ'**.

Peace and Blessings

Andrew

PS. Please be reminded that we look forward to a very special service on December 1st when as part of the morning service Eleanor Bakker will be formerly recognized and commissioned as a Worship Leader in the Methodist Church.

Father Christmas

You know you are getting old when Father Christmas starts looking younger.

Sunday Services

December

1 December	10.45am	Rev Andrew Prout	Communion
	4.00pm	Messy Church	
8 December	10.45am	Gift Service	
	6.00pm	Mrs K Kernaghan	
15 December	10.45am	Youth Church	
	6.00pm	Rev Richard Barley	Communion
22 December	10.45am	Mr David Spiers	
	6.00pm	Rev Andrew Prout	
29 December	10.45am	Rev Andrew Prout	
	6.00pm	Rev Denise Yeadon	

January

5 January	10.45am	Mr David King	
	4.00pm	Messy Church	
12 January	10.45am	Rev Hilary Cooke	Communion
	6.00pm	Mr Iain MacGillivray	
19 January	10.45am	Mr Richard Lucas	
	6.00pm	Rev David Deeks	Communion
26 January	10.45am	C Jones	
	6.00pm	Food and Fellowship	

Friday

Nothing ruins your Friday like realising it's only Wednesday.

December Dates

1 December at 10.45am	Morning Service including Commissioning Eleanor Baker as Worship Leader
1 December at 4.00pm	Messy Church
2 December at 7.30pm	Messy Church Planning Meeting
6 December at 6.00pm	Hanham High Street Christmas Fayre
8 December at 10.45am	Gift Service (All Age Worship)
11 December at 7.30pm	Circuit Meeting at Westbury on Trym
14 December at 10.00am	Church Prayer Meeting
15 December at 10.45am	Morning Service led by Youth Church
22 December at 6.00pm	Carols by Candlelight
24 December at 4.00pm	Crib Service led by Theresa Warrey & Eleanor Bakker
24 December at 11.15pm	Midnight Communion Service at Unity Oldland
25 December at 9.30am	Family Service led by Rev Andrew Prout
28 December at 10.00am	Church Prayer Meeting

January Dates

1 January at 2.30pm	Church Open for Reflection and Prayer Open from 2.30 – 4.30pm
5 January at 4.00pm	Messy Church
11 January at 10.00am	Church Prayer Meeting
12 January at 10.45am	Covenant Service
15 January at 7.30pm	Worship Consultation
19 January at 6.00pm	Week of Prayer for Christian Unity United Service
25 January at 10.00am	Church Prayer Meeting

Christmas and New Year Services

Sunday 8th December

10.45am All Age Gift Service

A service during which gifts new and unwrapped including toys are collected to give to local children and families in need.

Sunday 15th December

10.45am A Christmas Service led by our Youth Church

Sunday 22nd December

10.45am Service led by David Speirs

6.00pm Carol Service by Candlelight led by Rev Andrew Prout

Christmas Eve

4.00pm Crib Service

Children present are invited to take part in this service for all ages as we remember the story of Christ's birth.

11.15pm Midnight Communion at Unity Oldland Methodist Church

Christmas Day

9.30am Family Worship led by Rev Andrew Prout

Sunday 29th December

10.45am Service led by Rev Andrew Prout

6.00pm Service led by Rev Denise Yeadon

New Year's Day

2.00pm The Church will be open for two hours until 4.00pm.

Drop in any time for a period of quiet reflection for the New Year.

Sunday 5th January

10.45am Morning Worship led by David King

4.00pm Messy Church

Fun, food, worship and activity for all the family

A warm invitation is given to you to join us for all the above services.

Christmas Fair Saturday 30th November 2013

Our Annual Christmas Fair will be held on Saturday 30th November opening at 10.00am and closing at 12.30pm.

As well as your time we once again ask for your generous gifts of Cakes (for the Country Fare and two refreshments outlets), Recycled Gifts (those things you have which are in good condition but don't really want but no bric-a-brac please), Pickles & Jams, CDs and DVDs (no books or videos please), Plants & Flowers, Cosmetics, Toys and anything else the individual stallholders / providers request. We can not accept mains electrical goods.

Stall holders will be contacted and asked to organize the staffing of their stall. We are also pleased to have people on the day simply available as cover to help and if you are willing to do this please let me know. We will be setting up the halls and stalls at 2.00pm on Friday 29th November when you can bring your donations. We would welcome your help in setting up at this time as well as in the dismantling of the fair once it is finished.

So do come along and enjoy the camaraderie and ambience of the occasion as well as good food and lots of things to buy. You can also meet Father Christmas and the Messy Church Puppets. The fair is a means both of outreach into the community and of raising money for the ongoing work of our Church. Please put the date in your diary and make every effort to attend and also to invite neighbours and friends.

Rev Andrew Prout

Stationing and Sabbatical Update

First, to inform everyone that we were not matched with a minister to succeed me next September in the first round of stationing in November. I was offered an appointment in Bramhall south of Manchester but following the visit felt with the receiving Churches that this might not be the right appointment at this particular time. I now go forward to the second round of stationing and await the next appointment presented to me following the meeting of the Stationing Matching Group on 2nd and 3rd December. It would also be our hope that following this meeting a minister is invited to

look at the Hanham and Unity Oldland appointment. Please continue to hold all involved in this process in your prayers especially our Circuit stewards and Claire as our senior steward. If the second round of stationing is unsuccessful in matching a minister to us we will await the third and final round of stationing which will take place in January. I naturally also welcome your prayers as my future is determined.

Secondly, as you are aware I am on Sabbatical between January and March. A Sabbatical is a gift of time from the Church given to a minister. In the Methodist Church this gift translates into a three month period, and is taken after the minister's first ten years in ministry and thereafter every seven years. This will be my second Sabbatical and during this period I will be released from my normal duties in order to find refreshment and renewal in rest, areas of interest, study, training, opportunity for reflection and practical engagement. My plans at this stage include a pilgrimage to Rome, some visits to various Churches to consider methods of outreach, consideration of a variety of resources now utilized by Churches to encourage growth in discipleship, some further reading on Islam which is something I explored during my last sabbatical, and some time spent on retreat as I reflect on twenty years in ministry, the first three years in training and the following seventeen in the active work. During my Sabbatical Rev Angie Hoare will be giving Pastoral Oversight to Hanham and matters of pastoral need and concern should in the first instance be communicated to Claire Angell our senior steward. Finally, it is worth saying that in many ways a Sabbatical can be an opportunity not only for the minister but also for the Church to grow and develop. I pray indeed that my Sabbatical in 2014 will see us both mutually gain and I shall look forward to my return in April to share its fruit and share my final Easter and months with you before my move next summer.

Rev Andrew Prout

Sums up Christmas

Three phrases that sum up Christmas are: Peace on Earth; Goodwill to Men; and Batteries not included.

Alice Grace Carter's Thanksgiving Service

One of Andrew's first duties as a new minister at Hanham Methodist in September 2005 was to preside over the funeral of Lilian May Blackmore, my Nan. Since then, Andrew has had what I suspect is a disproportionately large number of ceremonial duties in respect of the Blackmore family. We have had funerals for my Dad, Uncle Don, Ted, my Granddad, and his sister, Dorothy, but there have also been happier Blackmore-centric occasions at the Church in this time: Don and Dot's special wedding celebration, and my Harry's Thanksgiving Service.

The event that, I think, is likely to be the last of the Blackmore 'do's during Andrew's tenure at Hanham, Alice's Thanksgiving, took place on 27 October. By a complete, but still very satisfying, coincidence, this would have been Lil's 96th birthday so that the first and last of our events were, in some way, tied together. It is fitting, I think, that it should have been a joyful occasion, only sad at all in the sense that some who ought properly to have been there, could not be. The Blackmores - and, by necessity, those who choose to join with them - are a predominantly upbeat, and essentially stoic lot: it would have been entirely wrong somehow to end with anything teary. Alice is calm, and beautiful, and patient, and joyous - nothing sad about that.

The service was everything we could have wanted it to be. Our favourite moments? Probably Harry's impromptu, 'Hello Everyone' and Alice clapping the puppets. We are very very grateful to Andrew for accommodating our less than orthodox plans for the ceremony, and to the whole of the Church for allowing him to allow us to put those plans into action; and, to those of you who attended the service, for supporting our family. Many of our friends and family, who had not been to Hanham before, have commented to us on the warm welcome they received. David said in his speech-ette after lunch in Room 4 how this approach reflected the best of Christianity, a properly Christian attitude. I agree.

Thank you.

Sally Blackmore

Retreat Day

Fifteen of us journeyed to the picturesque village of Chew Stoke to hold our annual retreat in the Methodist Chapel.

As we entered the impressive newly built hall our eyes alighted on a beautiful bowl of fruit in the centre of the room. We were later to learn that each item in the bowl carried the same initial letter as one of the nine fruits of the Spirit (e.g. pineapple for peace). This was to be the theme of the day which was divided into three sessions.

Each session began with some reflections on three of the fruits, love, joy, peace, then kindness, goodness and patience and finally faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. This was then followed by a period of reflection when we were free to read from many of the thought provoking books available, take a walk around the village or just rest and pray. There were three tables laid out with numerous visual aids to help us reflect on the various fruits: for instance a box of chocolates for self-control and a pack of cards for patience.

We enjoyed a sumptuous buffet lunch and the day closed with communion led by Andrew from a liturgy appropriate to the theme. Our thanks are due to Joan and Glenys for all the hard work and preparation they put in to ensure the day was a great success.

Tim Lansdown

Worship Committee Chairman

Runs over

A father gave his daughter a young puppy for Christmas. An hour later, he found her in the kitchen, looking sadly at a puddle in the centre of the floor. "Look Dad," she said, "My pup runneth over!"

Father Christmas

You know you are getting old when Father Christmas starts looking younger.

Crossword

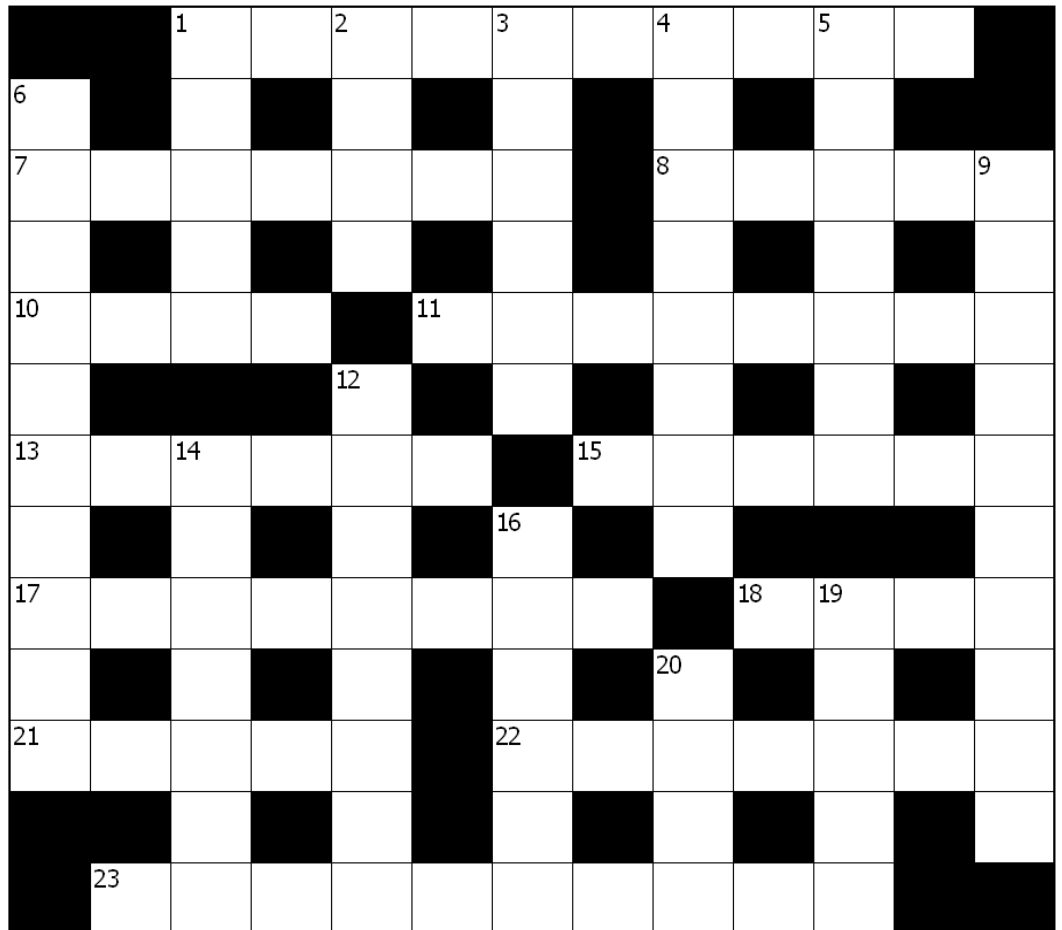
Across

1 Provisional meeting place of God and the Jews (Exodus 25:9) (10)
 7 David's third son, killed when his head got caught in a tree during a battle with his father (2 Samuel 18:14–15) (7)
 8 They ruled much of the west coast of South America in the 15th and early 16th centuries (5)
 10 Small deer of European and Asian extraction (4)

11 Seized control of (Numbers 21:25) (8)
 13 Terror (Luke 24:5) (6)
 15 First World War heroine shot by the Germans in Brussels, Nurse Edith — (6)
 17 Stormy (8)
 18 A bitter variety of this, together with lamb and unleavened bread, was the Passover menu for anyone 'unclean' (Numbers 9:11) (4)
 21 Arson (anag.) (5)
 22 How John Newton described God's grace in his well-known hymn (7)
 23 Habitation (Isaiah 27:10) (10)

Down

1 '— and see that the Lord is good' (Psalm 34:8) (5)
 2 'The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are as — as a lion' (Proverbs 28:1) (4)



3 One of the exiles, a descendant of Parosh, who married a foreign woman (Ezra 10:25) (6)
 4 He escaped from Nob when Saul killed the rest of his family and joined David (1 Samuel 22:19–20) (8)
 5 City and lake in Central Switzerland (7)
 6 'Offer your bodies as living — , holy and pleasing to God' (Romans 12:1) (10)
 9 Pouches carried by horses (Genesis 49:14) (10)
 12 One who accepts government by God (8)
 14 Aromatic substance commonly used in Jewish ritual (Exodus 30:1) (7)
 16 He asked Jesus, 'What is truth?' (John 18:38) (6)
 19 Are (Romans 13:1) (5)
 20 'You are to give him the name Jesus, because he will — his people from their sins' (Matthew 1:21) (4)

Sudoku

Easy

2		3		6				8
	7			5	1	3		
	5	9						
4		2	6	3			5	9
				9				
3	9			1	4	2		6
						4	2	
		1	8	4			3	
7				2		9		5

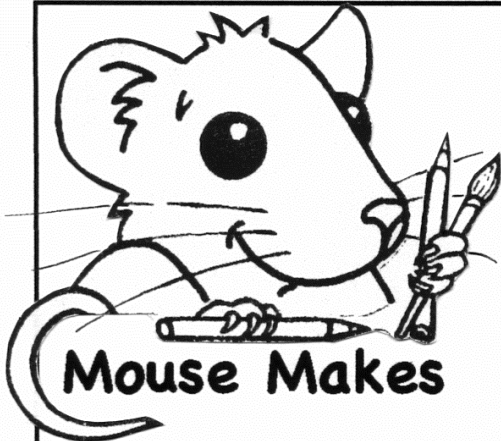
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Intermediate

		8						
			3		7		5	
	2					9		3
				9			6	2
2		4				8		1
6	5			7				
4		9					1	
	1		5		8			
						2		

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For the Children – Mouse Makes – December



A SAVIOUR HAS BEEN BORN!
 "Good news! - **wonderful, joyous**
 news for **all** people.
 A Saviour has been born.
 He is **Christ the Lord.**"



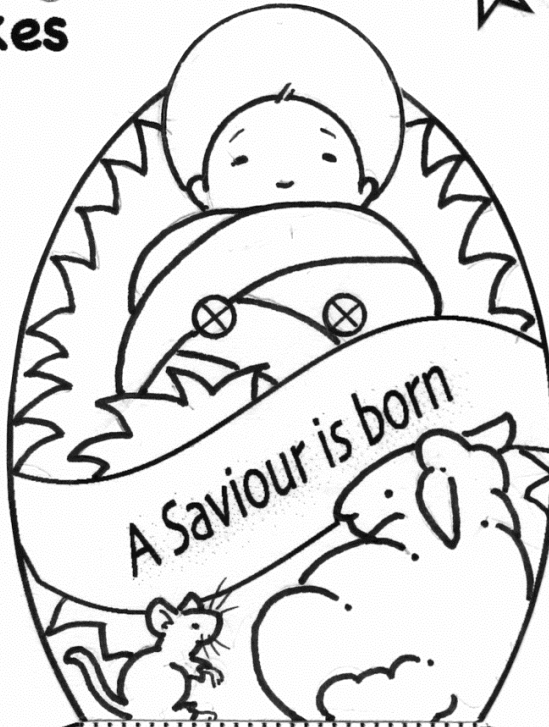
"Glory
 to God
 in the
 heavenly
 heights,
Peace
 to all
 men and
 women
 on earth
 who please
 him."

Read about the
 birth of Jesus
 in Luke
 chapters 1 and 2

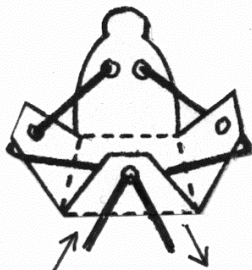
- Make this
 crib box
 to hang
 from the
 Christmas
 tree.



- Glue onto
 thin card then
 carefully cut
 around the
 outside. Fold
 back the sides
 along the
 dotted lines.

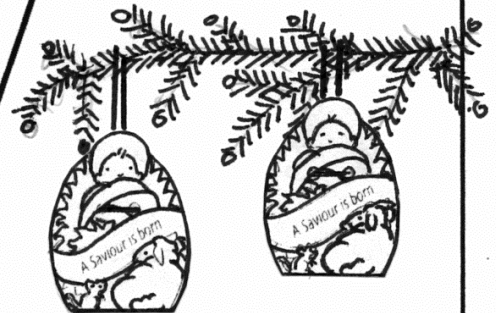


- Punch out the
 ⊗ holes then cut 30cm
 of thin ribbon and thread
 through the holes.



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

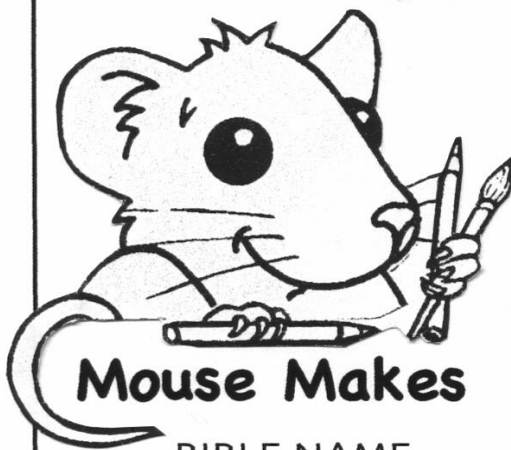
HAPPY
 CHRISTMAS!



- Photocopy this page onto card
 to make lots of crib boxes.



For the Children – Mouse Makes – January



Eight days after he was born, Mary and Joseph named their baby with the name the angel Gabriel had given them. It was a special name for a very special baby.. the name **JESUS** which means **GOD IS SAVIOUR**



Read: *Matthew 1:21 and Luke 2:25-38*

BIBLE NAME WORDSEARCH

- ABRAHAM =father of many
- ADAM =man
- ANDREW =strong man
- AMOS =burden bearer
- ANNA =gracious
- BENJAMIN =son of the right hand
- EVE =to breathe
- ELIZABETH =fullness of God
- ESAU =hairy
- DEBORAH =bee
- DANIEL =God my judge
- DAVID =beloved
- GABRIEL = man of God
- GAD =fortune
- HANNAH =gracious
- ISAAC =laughter
- JESUS = God is saviour
- JOSEPH = increase
- JOSHUA = saviour
- MATTHEW =gift of God
- MOSES =deliverer
- NAOMI =beautiful
- NATHANIEL =gift of God
- PAUL =small, humble
- PETER =a rock
- PHOEBE =bright, pure
- JOHN =God is gracious
- PRICILLA =ancient
- RUTH =friend
- SARAH =princess
- SHEM =name
- STEPHEN =crowned
- TAMAR =palm tree
- THOMAS =twin
- TIMOTHY =valued of God

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

Can you find all these bible names in the grid?

Does your name have a meaning?

The Prophet

On Giving

*You often say 'I would give, but only to the deserving.'
The trees in your orchard say not so, nor the flocks in your pasture.
They give that they may live, for to withhold is to perish
Surely he who is worthy to receive his days and his nights,
is worthy of all else from you.
And he who has deserved to drink from the ocean
deserves to fill his cup from your little stream.*

At this time of year letters are dropping through our doors from numerous charitable organisations using the Christmas season as a lever to trouble our conscience and increase their income. We therefore have to make a judgement which ones to support and which ones to ignore.

A few years ago I was treasurer of a local charity raising funds to try and help those whose lives had been blighted by drug abuse either directly or through family connections. The chairman would remind us that ours was what he called a 'dirty charity'. He meant that most people would rather give to charities that assisted animals or disadvantaged children rather than individuals who seemingly had brought their troubles on themselves.

The Prophet is clear, as was Jesus that all people are equal in God's eyes and a challenge to Christians is to succour the disadvantaged whatever the cause of their predicament. Read Matthew 25:31-46

Tim Lansdown

Windows

A wife texted her husband on a cold winter morning: "Windows frozen."
Her husband texted back: "Pour some lukewarm water over it."
The wife texted back five minutes later: "Computer's completely not working now."

Y's Men's Club of Hanham Events

Please come and join us for the following family friendly events:-

Christmas Singalong (with Glenys our favourite accompanist)

Thursday 19th December, start time 7.00pm

Everybody £1 to include drinks, mince pie and sweets.

Names to any Y's Man or just come on the night.

Film Night (Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dream Coat)

Friday 10th January, start time 7.00pm.

Donations of £2 per person would be appreciated to include drink and biscuits.

Names to any Y's Man or just come on the night.

Thank you very much.

Pam Liddiard

Celebrating Christmas 2013

Gift Service will be on the morning of 8th December this year. We shall be delighted to receive new toys for children up to 5 years and family gifts, like chocolates & biscuits, which we can send to "Home Start"; Blankets, hats & scarves for Julian Trust and towels for Midland Road. Please bring them all to the service.

As in previous years we shall be setting up a "Christmas Card Tree", where greetings can be posted for friends and members at Church, whilst making a donation to our Church Charity.

15th December, Mission Committee will be hosting a Christmas Tea from 4.00pm onwards, come and enjoy a cup of tea and Christmas fare and then join for Worship at 6pm.

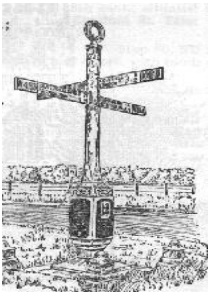
All donations for Christian Aid.

1st January 2014, we shall be holding a "reflection" from 2.00 – 4.00pm, in the Sanctuary. This will give opportunity for quiet reflection on 2013, whilst looking forward to 2014; a chance to listen to music and readings and then enjoy a cup of tea or coffee.

We look forward to seeing you at one or all of these events.

Pam Blackmore
Mission Chairman

Signposts



Recently children patiently and in expectation waited to go down the steps to the grotto in the Church of the Holy Nativity in Bethlehem, a wonderful experience. I also remember waiting for that moment having come to this very special place to remember when Jesus, the Son of God, came into the world to bring saving grace to all. Walking in Capernaum or by the Lake of Galilee were also places to remember. Places are important to us, where we were born, brought up or went to school, some bringing memories of joy others of sadness.

Christmas brings memories of past ones and family members, the wonder of children as they experience it for the first time. So this time of thanksgiving and celebration is a mixture of memories and emotions but most important of all is to know that Jesus is central to our celebration and came that we might learn of true love. Hopefully it might be a time when we all at whatever age might still be filled with wonder, anticipation and even excitement at this wonderful time. May we all enjoy a peaceful and Happy Christmas and look forward in hope to a New Year.

Arnold Wheeler

Following the Dream

My husband Pete and I met in Liverpool during the City's hey days of the mid 1960s. He was a Navigating officer in the Merchant Navy, whilst I was studying there at a Teacher Training College. Before the end of the decade, we were married, but I really disliked being left alone, whilst Pete was at sea, so eventually he gave up the job he loved, seeking employment ashore. Within three years of our wedding, we had become proud



parents to both our daughter Karen and son John, there being just eighteen months between them. Whilst enjoying the following twenty or so years, a busy yet truly happy time, bringing up our family, we both were determined there would still be life for us, when our youngsters had grown and fled the nest. So it was, with them both married by our mid fifties, plans rapidly formulated for our early retirement and 'following the dream'.

I had always wanted to spend time cruising the English Canal system in our own narrow boat, whilst Pete, still with the sea in his blood, longed to sail to the Mediterranean in our 32 foot sailing boat 'Wandering Star'. Between us, a deal was struck, we would do both!

At this time I was a Primary School teacher with over thirty years service, involved in many aspects of school life. In my private life, having a passion for music, I belonged to a large Bristol choir, in addition to being, an active member of Hanham Methodist Church. My life was very full, I had many acquaintances, some really good friends, a lovely sister, wonderful daughter, son and three year old grandson. Could I really leave all this, to become a water-borne traveller. It was good to have dreams, but as plans started turning to reality, with them came more and more concerns and anxieties.



Despite the worries and doubts, on the 1st February 2001, we moved out of our bungalow in Longwell Green, and aboard our brand new 60 foot

narrow boat "Free Spirit". We had bought her as a mere steel shell twelve months earlier, fitting her out ourselves, during the intervening months. We were so proud taking up residence, in what was to us, such a superb home. We had decided to rent out our bungalow, but being fortunate that the agents had found a tenant within only a week, it was necessary for us to remove from it all our personal belongings. Oh how I well remember, packing up and deciding what I could take aboard, there was no room for unnecessary clutter and I can hear Pete even now saying "Never mind whether you use it, do you need it?" Obviously many things could not go with us, but some being too precious or sentimental to discard, they were placed safely "in store".

Then followed a hectic period entertaining friends and family aboard, saying our farewells, before eventually casting off from our berth at Phoenix Wharf, Keynsham, to cruise the English Canal System. The following two and a half years was a truly remarkable and wonderful experience, during which we covered the great majority of the system. We frequently welcomed friends and family aboard, celebrated the birth of our second grandson and enjoyed every day of our stress free lifestyle, but the joint deal had been struck, so at the close of 2003 'Free Spirit' was placed on the market and remarkably sold within two weeks!

As we heralded in 2004, it was time for plans of the Mediterranean adventure to begin. We had sold our sailing boat "Wandering Star", prior to cruising the canal system, now with the sale of "Free Spirit" having been completed so swiftly and tenants still occupying our bungalow, we were homeless! A caravan was quickly purchased as a temporary home, allowing us to tour the country looking for the right boat for the sea cruising. We lived in the caravan for a few months, before eventually finding the boat which filled all our criteria.

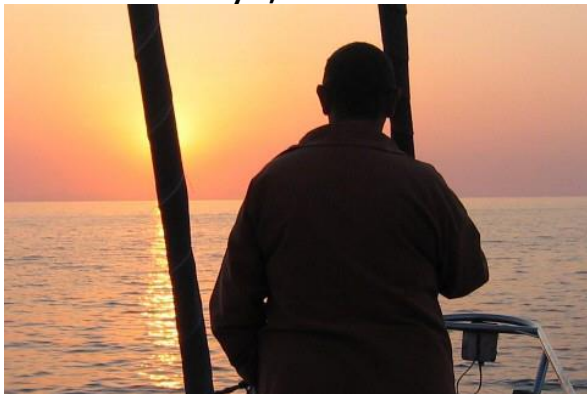
"Market Lady" is a Vancouver 32, renowned cruising yachts with an excellent reputation for their sea kindly characteristics, we became the proud owners by the close of March 2004.



Our first years cruising aboard her was to be in local British and North French waters, familiarizing ourselves with her, whilst discovering any

alterations we might wish to make during the winter of 2004/2005. We both thoroughly enjoyed the year, yet, whilst absolutely convinced "Market Lady" had been the perfect choice, at this stage I really could not imagine, ever sailing to the 'Med', it was only other women I thought, with far more guts and sailing experience than me, that made it - **that far!**

That winter, we lived aboard in Falmouth Yacht Village and it was great. We both signed on with a local employment agency, working to assist the budget for our proposed alterations and equipment we wanted, for "Our Lady". I regularly attended and sang in the choir of Falmouth Methodist Church where I made many new friends, and was privileged to sing with choirs from all over Cornwall, in Truro Cathedral. As winter turned into spring we commenced preparing ourselves and "Market Lady" for our departure to the Mediterranean, but I was becoming more and more mindful of how I could happily have stayed in Falmouth, living aboard "Market Lady", in the relative safety of this beautiful harbour.



With the end of May approaching visits to see our family were arranged, a very emotional time for me, before finally taking our leave of Falmouth, at midday on the 11th June 2005.

I was very apprehensive, yet equally excited as we let go our lines. I knew our boat would always take care of us and Pete was so encouraging, caring and such wonderful company. As sunset approached on this first day at sea, we prepared "Our Lady" for her night crossing of the Channel. The coastline of Cornwall was fast fading to the north and I began to relax, realising this was going to be an amazing adventure.

Pete and I had planned our route together, necessitating of course, such places as Finisterre, The Atlantic coast of Portugal, Cape St. Vincent, the notorious Bay of Biscay, and many more. These areas conjured within me, anxiety and fear. BBC Shipping Forecasts, I could hear them in my head, "Biscay, Finisterre, gale 8 rising to severe gale 9". Had I ever heard of good weather forecast for these places?

As it turned out, the three day Biscay crossing was amazing. We held two hour watches during the nights, my confidence growing with each passing

hour. We were accompanied by dolphins, but otherwise had the Bay to ourselves. Approaching North Spain visibility was poor, we could not see the rugged mountainous coastline much before we reached the Ria entrance. On doing so, our welcome was loud - a terrific thunderstorm with a cold strong westerly wind kept us on our toes, for about thirty minutes, conditions were quite unpleasant. As the squalls passed, we found ourselves a comfortable spot to anchor at the head of the Ria, an easy row in the dinghy to the town Quay.

We were elated! Whilst sitting in the cockpit enjoying a celebration drink, we sent text messages to our family, notifying them of our safe arrival. We really did feel on top of the world**WE HAD MADE IT, WE HAD CROSSED THE DREADED BAY OF BISCAY IN A LITTLE 32FT BOAT.** For me this was a real milestone. Whilst I know many people have made this trip before me and many will to do so again, I never really believed I could ... **but I had.**



Sailing onwards, La Coruna was an interesting vibrant City which we loved, our time there a contrast to the peace and beauty of Aries, Camarinas, Muros and Islas de Cies. The infamous Cape Finisterre, never since leaving Falmouth had the seas been as calm, again, a real high.

The final port in North Spain, Bayona, similar in many ways to La Coruna but smaller, was lovely. Reaching Portugal, a most exciting sail up the River Tejo, into Lisbon was a highlight, before continuing southwards to Sines. Years previously, whilst enjoying a package holiday on the Algarve, we had visited Cape St Vincent, which we had to round before reaching Lagos. Never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined then, sailing round the Cape in our own boat. Once more , idyllic conditions, sailing in a force 4 westerly wind in brilliant sunshine with dolphins to guide us.



Arrival at The Algarve, our destination for 2005, represented an amazing achievement for me. With Pete's enthusiasm and

encouragement I had ventured further in our own boat than I had ever thought possible. After visiting Lagos, Portimao, Albufeira and Villamoura, we settled in Faro Lagoon to welcome aboard our family, enjoying with our Grandchildren, snorkelling, swimming, paddling, shell collecting and sand castle building. Friends who had visited in Falmouth before we left, again visited in Faro.



Throughout the whole trip, by the wonders of modern communications, we had kept in constant touch with all those folk I was so concerned about leaving behind. They were very much with me every step of the way.

I had conquered many anxieties and fears, it had been a real adventure so far. Join me in the next article, with news of places visited and some of our experiences during our eight years sailing in the Mediterranean.

By Margaret Wheeldon

Why?

A young couple invited some people to dinner. At the table, the mother turned to their six-year-old daughter and said, "Would you like to say the blessing?"

"I don't know what to say," the girl replied.

"Just say what you hear Mummy say," the father answered.

The daughter bowed her head and said, "O Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner?"

Crossword Answers

ACROSS:

1, Tabernacle. 7, Absalom. 8, Incas. 10, Roes. 11, Captured. 13, Fright. 15, Cavell. 17, Cyclonic. 18, Herb. 21, Sonar. 22, Amazing. 23, Settlement.

DOWN:

1, Taste. 2, Bold. 3, Ramiah. 4, Abiathar. 5, Lucerne. 6, Sacrifices. 9, Saddlebags. 12, Theocrat. 14, Incense. 16, Pilate. 19, Exist. 20, Save.

Smile Lines

The Haircut

A teenage boy had just passed his driving test. He asked his father when he could start using the family car. His father replied: "You bring your grades up from a C to a B average, study your Bible, and get your hair cut. Then we'll talk about the car."

The boy thought about that, and decided he'd settle for the offer. After about six weeks his father said, "Son, you've brought your grades up and I've observed that you have been studying your Bible, but I'm disappointed you haven't had your hair cut."

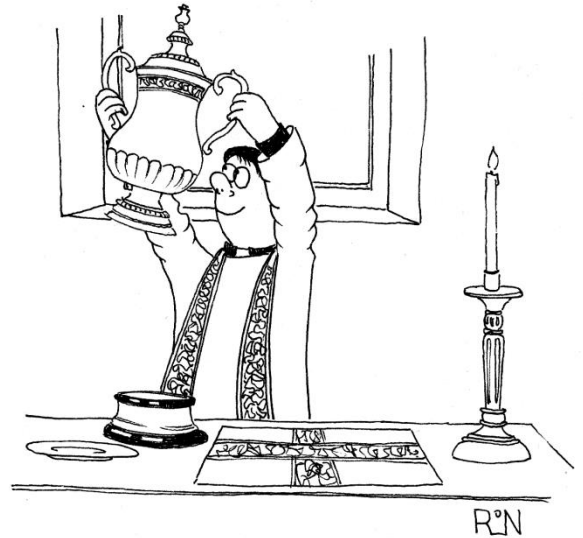
The boy said, "You know, Dad, I've been thinking about that, and I've noticed in my studies of the Bible that Samson had long hair, John the Baptist had long hair, Moses had long hair, and there's even strong evidence that Jesus had long hair."

His dad sat for a moment and then thoughtfully agreed. Then he added: "Did you also notice that they all walked everywhere they went?"

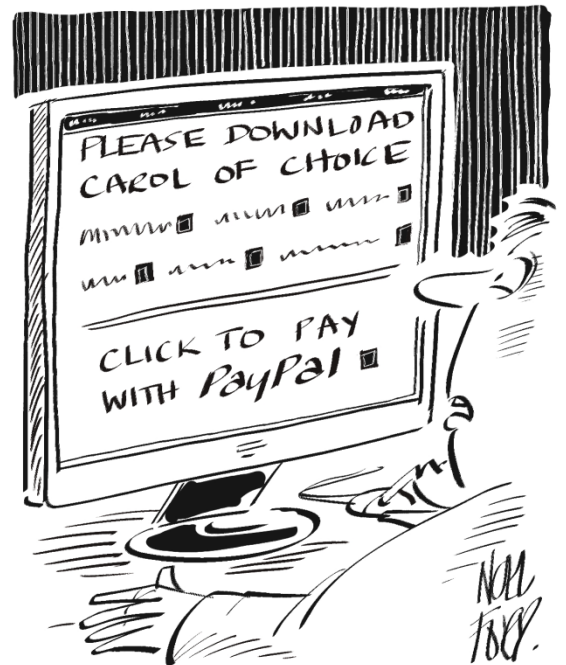
Sunday School Lesson

A Sunday school teacher was telling her class the story of the Good Samaritan, in which a man was beaten, robbed and left for dead. She described the situation in vivid detail so her students would catch the drama. Then she asked the class, "If you saw a person lying on the roadside all wounded and bleeding, what would you do?"

Jenny, a thoughtful little girl broke the hushed silence, "I think I'd be sick!"



The special silverware only came out once a year



We've got online carol-singers again!

Pause for Thought

The Christmas story has been around for a long time, but today it's being forgotten. Just 12 per cent of adults know the nativity story, and more than one-third of children don't know whose birthday it is. Meanwhile, 51 per cent of people now say the birth of Jesus is irrelevant to their Christmas. Some of the UK's leading Christian Churches and Agencies are therefore coming together because they believe Christmas is worth saving. Christmas Starts with Christ is a campaign aimed at making Christ and the amazing story of his birth the focus of everyone's thoughts at this special time of year.

From Singing the Faith (No. 207)

Jesus is the heart of Christmas,
Give the Lord His rightful place!
Garlands, gleam with his charisma,
Tinsel, glisten with his grace!
Jesus is the heart of Christmas
Welcome him with love and praise!

Jesus is the heart of Christmas,
Share him in each card you send.
Give each gift in love and friendship,
Share his gifts which have no end.
Jesus is the heart of Christmas,
Lord and Saviour, Guide and Friend.

Jesus is the heart of Christmas,
Find his peace on busy days.
May the messages of Advent
Guide us through the Christmas maze.
Jesus is the heart of Christmas,
Sing each carol in his praise!

Marguerite Kendrick (b. 1927)

Rotas (Doors & Books and Flowers)

Doors and Books

Dec	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th
AM	P Webber J Tippett	M Frost W Frost	M Howe N Howe	J Angell M Brooks	A Sagar M Sagar
PM	Messy Church	T Lansdown A Angell	H Wheeler A Wheeler	A Houlden M Houlden	M Kenway M Kenway

Jan	5th	12th	19th	26th
AM	P Blackmore J Green	M Wilby N Hogg	B Jones H Teague	J Hurfurt S Brown
PM	Messy Church	R Ireland C Haycock	B Griffen W Stamford	J Morgan M Morgan

Rotas – Flowers

Dec	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th
Church	Valerie Smith	Hilary Knapp	Christmas	Christmas	Free
War Memorial	Free	Hilary Knapp	Christmas	Christmas	Free

Jan	5th	12th	19th	26th
Church	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
War Memorial	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc

Weekly Activities

You are invited to share in our services and activities as listed below.

If you would like an introduction to any of the groups / activities please contact the Minister or a Church Steward.

Details of further events inside.

Sunday

10.45am Morning Worship, Youth Church & Creche
4.00pm Messy Church (First Sunday of each month)
6.00pm Evening Worship

Monday

10.00am – 3.00pm Friendly Table
2.30pm Bright Hour
Evening Brownies, Guides & Rangers
Table Tennis

Tuesday

7.30pm Girl's Night In
(First Tuesday of the month, ask about venue)

Wednesday

1.30pm Mums & Toddlers
Evening Rainbows
7.30pm Wives Group (Alternate weeks)
Men's Curry Club (As announced)

Thursday

2.15pm Shawl Ministry (Last Thursday of the month)
Evening Boy's Brigade (Anchors, Juniors, Company & Seniors)
Brownies

Friday

7.30pm Y's Men (Third Friday of the month)
Men's Curry Club (As announced)

Saturday

9.30am Prayer Meeting (Second & Fourth Saturday of the month)
Coffee Morning