

♦ Trinity Methodist Church ♦ Kidderminster ♦

Trinity *Tidings*



...all are welcome in this place!

December 2022 & January 2023

**TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH
CHUIRCHFIELDS, KIDDERMINSTER**

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**The closing date for items for the
February edition
Of Trinity Tidings is Sunday, 29 January, 2022**

**Please email articles, preferably as a Word Document to:
arleystation@aol.com**

Thanks to John Harris for designing the front and back covers,
and to Jon Skitt for putting the magazine online each month.

Dear Friends,

I suppose, like me, you will have heard the latest census results report that Christian religious belief among the population in Britain has fallen again.

It has fallen from 2001 when 71.7% (37.3 million) described themselves as Christian, to 59.3% of the population in 2011 and now in 2021 46.2% (27.5 million). According to the Office of National Statistics, who carried out the survey, over the last ten years the Muslim, Hindu, Sikh & Buddhist faiths have increased very slightly, with the Jewish faith staying the same. It is those in the group who claim 'No Religion' that has grown significantly.

There are of course various theories as to why this should be, such as age and generational shifts. Professor Abby Day from the University of London says "Baby boomers lost their religion in the 1960's and raised their millennial children to be non-religious". There are also calls from the Humanists and the National Secular Society for such things as reform of the Anglican establishment, daily prayers in parliament and in schools, suggesting they are outdated and fail to reflect the country we live in. That's as maybe, but I don't think any of this comes as a surprise to anyone who goes to church. It is plain to see, especially at this time of year, how Christian religious festivals such as Christmas have become secularised.

I know it doesn't just apply to this time of year, the same applies to Easter. Every year since the Churches Together in Kidderminster Easter Trail in Brinton's Park was started some of the councillors involved have tried to remove the religious aspect of it, which to you and I seems crazy, but is the annual reality. Therefore, and I know this is a familiar mantra, amidst the tinsel and fairy lights it really is important to keep 'Christ' in 'Christ'mas!

Falling numbers, whether that be in the countrywide ten-yearly census, or in a small local church, always feels like failure. We tend to be programmed to view success in terms of numbers, the bigger the number the greater the success and Church is no different. But the Church isn't called to be successful, the Church is called to be faithful. We're called to be faithful!

However we decide to celebrate Christmas this year and I'm mindful that for some it will be a time of great expense, not least of all because of increased energy bills and the like, and for others across the world there will be other hardships to endure. We should remember the birth that gave us that first Christmas was a birth of uncertainty, of discomfort, of poverty, of risk, but most of all a birth of faithfulness.

As another Christmas approaches, as festive lights appear on trees, as cards fall onto doorsteps in greater number, as the razzmatazz of Christmas gets truly underway, may we all grow in faithfulness and know the faithfulness of God for ourselves in the form of the Christ child. 'Emmanuel', 'God with us'.

Season's greetings and blessings to you all,

Nick

PRAYER CORNER

We remember in our prayers Liz potter, Les Fuller, Lyn Jones, Margot Stanton, Betty Norman, Beryl Cutts, Loree Napier, those on the Prayer Vine and people we know who need the love, comfort and the knowledge of Christ's presence with them.



Please pray in December and January for:

St Barnabas' Church

Franché Community Church and its Food Bank.

Kidderminster Baptist Church

Schools and Nurseries - Franché, St Catherine's,

Mayfield, Deerhurst and Barnabees Nurseries

Old Carolians Rugby Club

Residential housing

All Retail Shops in the Town Centre

Rosedene Specialist Residential Home

The Talking Newspaper

New Meeting & Mormon Church

Legal services and Banks

Town Hall

Doctor's Surgeries & Dentists

Carpet History - the Museum

Eateries

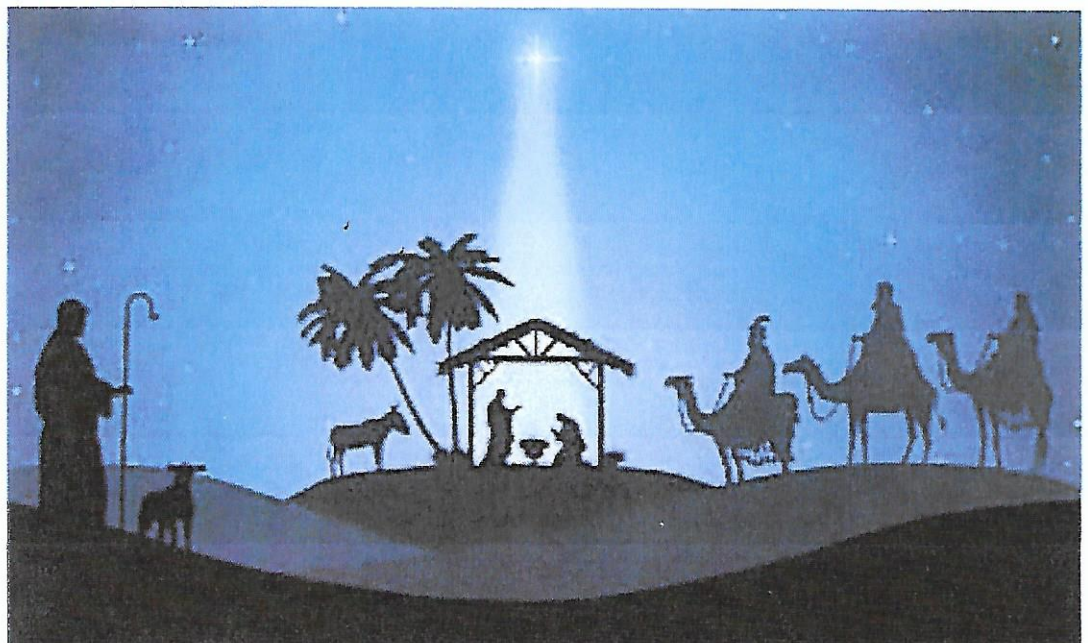
Weavers Wharf & Crossley Retail Park

Kidderminster Food Bank

St Basil's Hostel

Home Start

Kidderminster College and Library



From the Editor....

Dear Friends,

At this time of the year Arley station becomes transformed into the home of pantomime. There is a very large marquee filling the station yard. It was erected at the beginning of October and has a stage, raised seating, and space for an audience of 350 people. A professional acting company write and produce and perform a pantomime, with scenery, lighting and sound also professionally done. Although I live at Arley Station I have not yet seen it, but I can hear the music and the laughter coming from the marquee. The arrangements are that you book a compartment on the train, and you go back in the same compartment on the same train. One of the main characters in the pantomime is Father Christmas, and at the end of the show, he tells the children that when they get back on the train there will be surprise waiting for them. While everyone was enjoying the show, the 'elves' on the train put the children's presents in their compartment, complete with their name. Everyone seems to enjoy the experience, and it is good to hear the laughter and applause coming from the marquee.

The idea for this happened when a child or its parents could not go into a grotto to visit Father Christmas because of Covid restrictions. However theatres could re-open and so the pantomime idea began, and has been a great success.

The railway is very busy during December, as we also run the Steam in Lights train where the engine and the coaches are wrapped with multicoloured lights, and on the journey different displays along the track side are lit up as the train approaches. There is also The Enchanted Express and the Carol Trains. Not to mention the Christmas lunch diner – which I recommend!

It will be strange in January when everything is dismantled, packed away leaving behind nothing but many happy memories.

Just in case you are wondering, no, I am not the stand-in Father Christmas!

David



A Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year to everyone.

OFFERTORIES FOR THE PAST FOUR WEEKS ARE AS FOLLOWS

	Envelopes	Loose Cash	Standing Orders	Total
	£	£	£	£
06.11 & 13.11.22	219.00	128.40	1409.50	1756.90
20.11 & 27.11.22	316.00	127.00	1409.50	1852.50

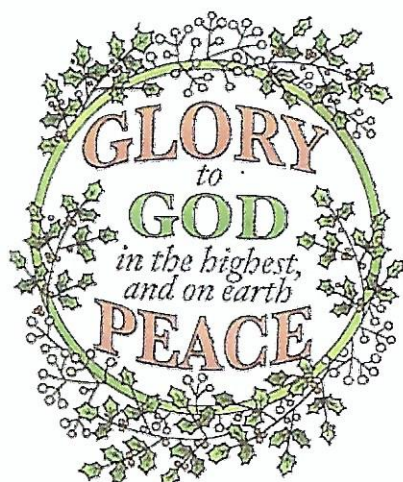
These amounts give a weekly average of £902

For the current church year to 31st August 2023 it is estimated that offertories of £1250 per week will be required to break even.



SERVICES IN DECEMBER & JANUARY

Dec 4 th	10.30am	Rev Nick Collison – Pastoral Visitors Re-dedication
	6.30pm	Mrs Janet Murray
Dec 11 th	10.30am	Mr Ray Simpson
	7.30pm	Highley Brass Band Concert
Dec 18 th	10.30am	Mrs Sue Green – Joint Service with Baxter
	6.30pm	Rev Nick Collison & Rev Andrew Mann-Ray – Carol Service
Dec 24 th	11.30pm	Christmas Eve Midnight Communion
Dec 25 th	10.00am	Rev Nick Collison
Jan 1 st		No Services
Jan 8 th	10.30am	Rev Nick Collison – Covenant Service with Baxter
	6.30pm	Rev Andrew Mann-Ray
Jan 15 th	10.30am	Mrs Sue Stinton
	6.30pm	Rev Nick Collison & Rev Peter Levitt – Café Worship
Jan 22 nd	10.30am	Mr David Skitt
	6.30pm	Rev Nick Collison – Praise Service
Jan 29 th	10.30am	Rev Sue Levitt
	6.30pm	Mr Albert Wilkinson



BAXTER MINISTER'S LETTER

God with us...

Dear Friends,

Writing a Christmas message is a real challenge because what can you say that is new? After all the most important moment in history – the birth of our saviour Jesus – really can speak for itself without me trying to put a spin on it.

Christmas is such an awe inspiring moment though isn't it? It's the moment that God takes on flesh and 'moves into our neighbourhood' and means that no matter what we may be facing in our lives we can be reassured that God knows how we feel and can respond to us in all our need. And perhaps that's the most important part of the Christmas message for us this year.

The past few months have been fairly depressing in terms of what we have witnessed on the news. The cost of living crisis is affecting millions of people up and down the country and as I write these words people are worried about how they are going to make ends meet, are accessing foodbanks, receiving debt support etc. Added to this the threat of war hangs over us and although the war in Ukraine doesn't affect us directly, all of us feel its effects with the costs of energy and fuel spiralling out of control. And on top of that we see the worst effects of climate change as many parts of the world are becoming more and more uninhabitable and we are seeing people making very risky and perilous journeys to seek refuge in countries all over Western Europe.

In the face of such pain and misery it probably leads many of us to question where is God in all this? Does God even care for us? Well let's go back to the start of this letter and remind ourselves what Advent and Christmas are all about. This is when God makes his dwelling amongst us. This is the moment when God shows he cares. And this is the moment when the ways of the world are turned on their head.

The prophet Isaiah got it right when he declared to us "that a child is born, a son is given, and the government will be upon his shoulders. He will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of peace" and his "kingdom will have no end".

This is what Advent and Christmas are about. They declare there is a different way to live our lives. There is hope and good news for a better future. And it begins now.

Each of us carries this message of hope within our call to discipleship. Each of us is tasked with telling this good news to others. So this Advent and Christmas as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Saviour let's commit ourselves to declaring this truth and let's seek to birth God's kingdom into our church families and our community as we declare with one voice – Emmanuel, God is with us.

Yours in Christ,

Andrew



Reindeer Drive

Saturday 7th January 2023

11am start

Chip Lunch

(fish/sausage/veggie burger)

£7.50 each

Please speak to Sarah Cobon to book a place by

Monday 2nd January

NEW LIFE
TOGETHER



with *Roger Jones* and soloists from Christian Music Ministries

presents The New Christmas Musical

Three Wise Camels

by Roger Jones

Conducted by
Roger Jones
in person

on Saturday
21st January 2023

at 7pm

at

Trinity Methodist Church,

Churchfields,

Kidderminster

Tickets

£7 each

Available from:

Sue Stinton

01562 752798 or

Katy Cornwell

01562 861023

These are the riddles you would find in Christmas Crackers

Do you know the answers?

1. What do Santa's helpers learn at school?
2. What happens if you eat Christmas decorations?
3. How does Jack Frost get to work?
4. Knock knock! Who's there. Arthur. Arthur who?
5. What do you get if you cross Santa with a duck?
6. Who hides in a bakery at Christmas?
7. What do you get if you cross a lion with a snowman?
8. What to monkeys sing at Christmas?
9. What do reindeer hang on a Christmas tree?
10. What is the best present in the world?
11. Why are Christmas trees bad at sewing?
12. What kind of motorbike does Santa ride?
13. What did one snowman say to the other?
14. What are the wettest animals in the world?
15. Which of Santa's reindeer has bad manners?
16. What do you get if you cross an apple with a Christmas tree?
17. What do you call Santa Claus when he doesn't move?
18. Why is it always cold at Christmas?
19. What's red and white, red and white, red and white?
20. What did the cow get for Christmas?
21. What do you call a snowman in the summer?
22. Why does Santa go down a chimney to deliver presents?
23. What are people who are scared of Santa Claus suffering from?
24. Who delivers presents to baby sharks?
25. What do you give a dog for Christmas?



Answers.....

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1. The elf-abet. | 19. Santa rolling down a hill |
| 2. You get tinselitis | 20. A cowculator |
| 3. By-icicle | 21. A puddle |
| 4. Arthur any mince pies left? | 22. Because it soots him |
| 5. A Christmas Quacker | 23. Claustrophobia |
| 6. A mince spy | 24. Santa Jaws |
| 7. Frostbite | 25. A mobile bone |
| 8. Jungle bells, jungle bells | |
| 9. Horn-aments | |
| 10. A broken drum. You just can't beat it. | |
| 11. They always drop their needles. | |
| 12. A Holly-Davidson | |
| 13. Do you smell carrot? | |
| 14. Rain-deer | |
| 15. Rude-olph | |
| 16. A pineapple | |
| 17. Santa pause | |
| 18. Because it's Decemberrrrrrrrr | |

I CAN HEAR YOUR GROANS,

BUT DON'T BLAME ME.

I GOT THEM ALL FROM

THE INTERNET!

HO HO HO!

A NEW ALPHABET -- FOR A NEW YEAR!

A is for Apple and B is for Boat,
That used to be right, but now it won't float!
Age before Beauty is what we once said,
But let's be a bit more realistic instead.

Now A's for arthritis; B's the bad back
C is for chest pains, perhaps cardiac?
D is for dental decay and decline,
E is for eyesight – can't read the top line!

F is for fissures and fluid retention,
G is for gas which I'd rather not mention.
H is high blood pressure – I'd rather it low;
I for incisions with scars you can show.

J is for joints, out of socket, won't mend,
K is for knees that crack when they bend.
L is for libido, what happened to sex?
M is for memory, I forget what comes next.

N is for neuralgia, in nerves way down low;
O is for osteo, the bones that won't grow!
P for prescriptions, I have quite a few,
Just give me a pill and I'll be good as new!

Q is for queasy, is it fatal, or flu?
R is for reflux, one meal becomes two.
S is for sleepless nights, counting my fears,
T is for tinnitus; there's bells in my ears!

U is urinary; big troubles with flow;
V is for vertigo, that's "dizzy" you know.
W is for worry, NOW what's going round?
X is for Xray, and what might be found.

Y is another year I'm left here behind.
Z is for zest that I still have – in mind.
I've survived all my symptoms, my body's deployed
And I've kept twenty-six doctors fully employed!

A Happy New Year to you, and all your ailments!!

This was sent to sent to us by Derek Robson



Crocus planting at Trinty

Kidderminster and Husum have been twin towns, sharing fun and friendship, since 1955. Visits to Husum are often timed for the annual crocus festival – 6 million purple blooms in the castle park! The Twinning Association have been initiating planting these purple crocuses around Kidderminster for several years, hoping to enhance our town whilst fostering community spirit and civic pride.

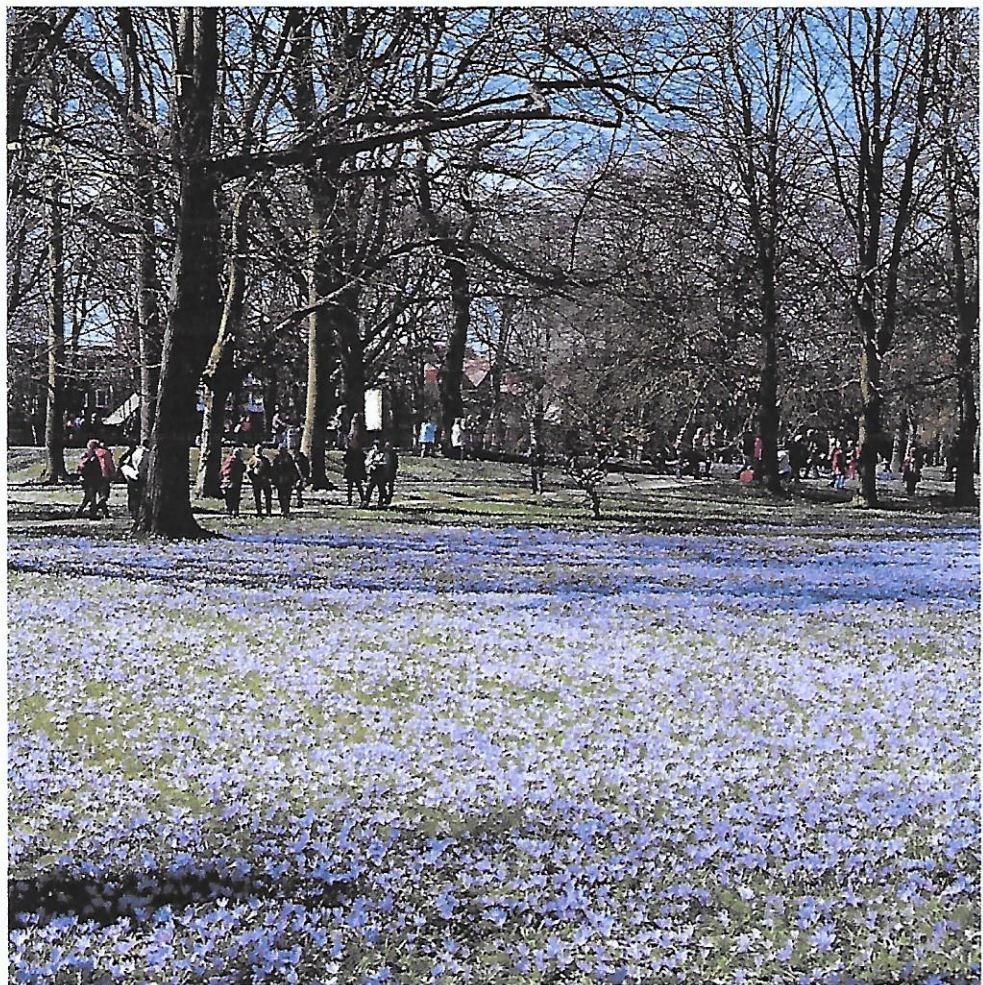
Our latest project was at Trinity Methodist Church - and a huge thank you to all those who turned out on an overcast Saturday morning to help! Luckily the weather bucked up for us and three major objectives were achieved.

The Guides tackled a horrid corner slope whilst Trefoil Guild members put in daffodils either side of the footpath before helping with the crocus corms.

The main grass area was largely dealt with by St George's Park friends, who came in number with safety netting, spades and muscle. Crafty Lady Lorraine kept everyone supplied with corms. Our surprise extra helpers were Elders Stephen and Gavin!

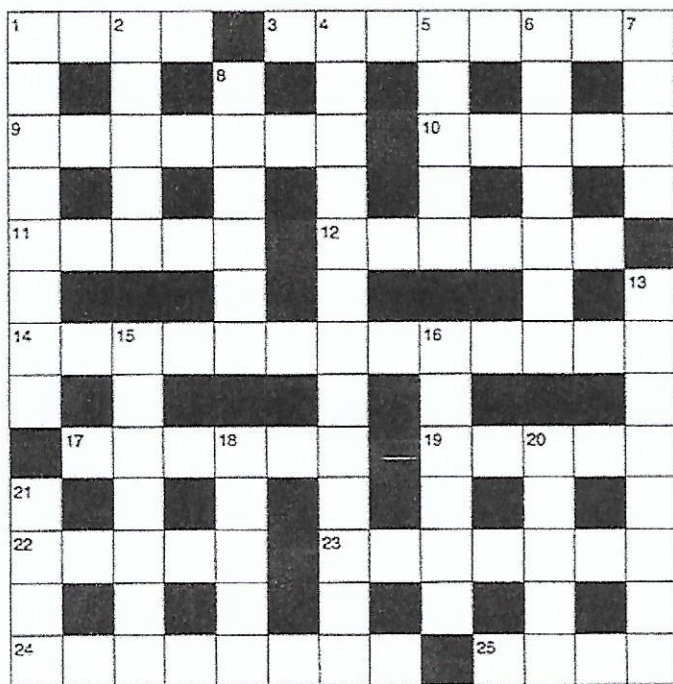
Trinity members Lin & John provided well deserved refreshments.

A thank you too to Spaggles Ladies who could not come but sent a very welcome donation. Fingers crossed now for a super display in Spring!



Crocuses in Husum

Parish Pump Crossword



Sudoku puzzle (Med)

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

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Across

- 1 'How long will you — your face from me?' (Psalm 13:1) (4)
- 3 'Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the — he bore' (Hebrews 13:13) (8)
- 9 Posh sin (anag.) (Romans 8:15) (7)
- 10 Solemn pledges (Matthew 5:33) (5)
- 11 Italian term for full orchestra (5)
- 12 'For he who avenges blood remembers; he does not — the cry of the afflicted' (Psalm 9:12) (6)
- 14 Prescience (1 Peter 1:2) (13)
- 17 Where a Hindu holy man lives (6)
- 19 'If he found any... who belonged to the Way, whether — — women, he might take them as prisoners' (Acts 9:3) (3,2)
- 22 Fragrance (2 Corinthians 2:15) (5)
- 23 Vine hen (anag.) (Jonah 1:2) (7)
- 24 Precious stone decorating the twelfth foundation of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:20) (8)
- 25 'Will you keep to the old path that evil men have — ?' (Job 22:15) (4)

Down

- 1 'Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with — — ' (Numbers 20:11) (3,5)
- 2 'You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, " — — murder"' (Matthew 5:21) (2,3)
- 4 One of Paul's many hardships endured as a servant of God (2 Corinthians 6:5) (13)
- 5 'We ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, — inwardly' (Romans 8:23) (5)
- 6 Changed (Daniel 6:8) (7)
- 7 'My yoke is — and my burden is light' (Matthew 11:30) (4)
- 8 Recoil (Revelation 12:11) (6)
- 13 'O Lord, you have — me and you know me' (Psalm 139:1) (8)
- 15 ' — to me the joy of your salvation' (Psalm 51:12) (7)
- 16 Express sorrow (Isaiah 16:7) (6)
- 18 'Then he said to Thomas, " — out your hand and put it into my side"' (John 20:27) (5)
- 20 'God has said, " — will I leave you; — will I forsake you"' (Hebrews 13:5) (5)
- 21 Son of Onam and brother of Shammai (1 Chronicles 2:28) (4)

CHRISTMAS SONGS

The following thirty songs became Christmas favourites, and some still are. How many can you recognise and perhaps sing along from memory? I have put in the main singer for them, but many were sung by several different singers. Clear your throat, take a deep breath, away we go!

The Christmas Song
White Christmas
Sleigh Ride
Jingle Bells
Have yourself a Merry Little Christmas
Santa Claus is coming to town
I saw Mommy kissing Santa Claus
Little Drummer Boy
Frosty the Snowman
Mary's Boy Child
Winter Wonderland
All I want for Christmas is you
Last Christmas
I wish it could be Christmas everyday
Merry Christmas
Do they know it's Christmas
Christmas Alphabet
When a child is born
Mistletoe and Wine
Saviour's Day
All I want for Christmas is my two front teeth
When Santa got stuck in the chimney
It's the most wonderful time of the year
It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas
Baby, it's cold outside
Santa Baby
Blue Christmas
Jingle Bell Rock
Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree
O Holy Night

Nat King Cole
Bing Crosby - of course
Leroy Anderson Orchestra
Ella Fitzgerald - surprisingly
Frank Sinatra - who else?
Peggy Lee
Jimmy Boyd
Harry Simeon Chorale

Harry Belafonte
Johnny Mathis
Mariah Carey
Wham
Wizzard
Slade
Band Aid
Dickie Valentine
Johnny Mathis
Cliff Richard
Cliff Richard

Andy Williams
Michael Bublé
Dean Martin
Eartha Kitt
Elton John
Bobby Helms
Nat King Cole
Mariah Carey

I expect there are many more. You will have to sing them to yourself!



GARDENING NOTES FOR DECEMBER & JANUARY

December is the first month of winter and the 21st is the day when the sun is 'way down south', seeming to appear stationary over the Tropic of Capricorn and the hours of daylight at their shortest over the Northern Hemisphere.

December is a typical winter month, but it can take on the characteristics of late autumn. Very mild weather can be experienced when south-westerly breezes flood the country with damp, moisture-laden air from the sub-tropical Atlantic. With little in the way of solar heating to the land.

Our heaviest snowfall here in the Midlands often results from a cold easterly flow clashing with milder air pushing to the south, our region then becoming 'the battlefield'. Snowfall, when deep, is a good insulator to plants that could otherwise be exposed to very low overnight temperatures.

Jobs in the garden will have to be undertaken as and when the weather allows, both time and daylight will be limited. If nothing else, try to keep the garden tidy and prepare the ground for the coming season.

If not already done it is not too late to trim lightly long shoots of roses to prevent 'wind rock' during the winter. However, if the weather is frosty or cold leave well alone and don't cut back too hard as this could lead to soft, sappy growth during mild spells which will only be killed by frosts. Don't compost shoots that have blackspot - burn them! Where soil has become compacted, or you've recently walked over it, use a spade or fork gently to chip or break up the upper layers, allowing frost action to get to work. Don't dig too deeply; this will take cold soil down deeper into the bed. Limited planting is possible where the weather allows, but only if soil conditions are favourable. Don't plant if it is frozen or waterlogged. Deciduous hedging should be planted as soon as possible.

Keep a check on forced bulbs for Christmas flowering, as they should be nearing the pint where they will need moving into a cool well-lit position. Frost can loosen the soil around recently planted shrubs and trees, so periodically check for 'lifted' plants and re-firm where necessary. 'Wind rock' can also loosen plants, so check for this at the same time.

For early winter colour you can do no better than the charming cyclamen coum. Often in flower just before Christmas C.coum is very hardy and, I believe, should be established in every garden, or in small alpine trough. Flowers can be white, delicate shell pink beautiful rose or deep magenta, the glossy dark green to patterned silver and the kidney shaped foliage only adds to its charm. A carpet of C.coum around the base of a mature tree in the darkest days of winter can really lift the heart. The soil should be well drained and the site slightly shaded during the summer, remaining moist during autumn through to spring. Top dress the site with leaf mould and grit and be sparing with fertiliser. They will reward you with a truly spectacular carpet of colour. One note of caution, hardy cyclamen are generally dormant during the summer, so remember where you planted them and do not hoe them out! As seedlings appear leave them to mature, and you will see the carpet of colour increasing year by year.

It may be cold outside, the ground frozen, but the shortest day is at hand and it can only get lighter from 21st onwards. The new gardening year starts soon!

Have a very Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year and enjoy your garden.

Bob

This is our Once-a-Year Day

'Well here it is Merry Christmas' screams Noddy Holder from Slade. Wall to wall music in ships and bars; thankfully no piped music in church, that's what they call Sanctuary. For us it's Carols, every one beautiful; why can't we have 'Away in a manger' in July? I wouldn't complain. Some of these carols are very old, some are modern but one thing stands out, they're the only songs in "Singing the Faith" that we know the words to. Though some lyrics are crazy, "Little Lord Jesus no crying He makes". We know Jesus was special, but a baby that doesn't cry?! Forget that, Carols are wonderful and moving in a simple way.

Christmas of course isn't mentioned in The Bible. St. Nicholas is given the credit for being the basis for Father Christmas, well noted for his generosity and kindness, he emerged in Victorian Times as a happy bearded man. It was an American, the Rev. Clement C. Moore, a New York Episcopal minister who made Santa Claus, he wrote "T'was the night before Christmas". He had a man who travelled by sleigh pulled by reindeer with a sack of toys on his back. He entered houses by going down chimneys and filling children's stockings with toys and sweets. How did we find out that Father Christmas wore red? That was from a Coca-Cola advertising campaign in 1931. Just think, on Christmas Eve he travels 221 million miles at an average speed of 1279 miles a second, 6,395 times the speed of sound. Thank heavens he doesn't need petrol. But this is the commercial side of Christmas – what does it really mean to us? It really is a special day.

The main point of Christmas is simply Jesus Christ and at Christmas we celebrate the birthday of the most famous man who has ever lived. Famous, you say? How come we called whatever happened before He was born BC and what happened after AD? The fact is that how we celebrate Christmas has simply destroyed the main vision of Jesus Christ. We eat, drink and be merry, we give presents, but the wise men were right, there should be gifts, but nothing less than gold for the infant Jesus. He was born to die for us, take Mark 10 v. 4,5 "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many" (NIV). So that's what Christmas is all about. Jesus never asked us to remember His birth, He wanted us to remember His death. Christmas would have meant nothing to Jesus. It was through His death we would find eternal life and, believing this, we will be saved. Now a puzzle, not Where's Wally? But Where's Joseph? OK, he's only a surrogate father but he saved baby Jesus's life by taking Him away to Egypt. As a carpenter he was by Jesus's side most of his life. Surely, apart from God, he had the most influence on His life and early years. In fact, his hand rocked Jesus's cradle. You see a painting or artefact, it's Madonna and child, virgin and child or adoration of the magi. One whole room in the National Gallery is devoted to Leonardo da Vinci's 'Virgin and Child', but no Joseph. The Christmas story is wonderful, the baby became The Messiah so remember Joseph in your prayers this Yuletide.

This story, of course, begins in Genesis and as we move through the Old Testament there are many clues to Him who was to come later. Let us make this year a celebration of the chance to receive Him and believe in Him. This is our once-a-year day, not just a day for people to be nice to one another. Over 2000 years of Christ's birth become real to us. As Tiny Tim said in 'A Christmas Carol' "God bless us every one!"

However, the last work has to go to the late Poet Laureate and historian John Betjeman:

*"And is it true, and is it true
This most tremendous tale of all
Seen in a stained-glass window's hue
A baby in an ox's stall?
The maker of the stars and sea
Became a child on Earth for me?"*

*No love that in a family dwells
No carolling in frosty air
Nor all the steeple-shaking bells
Can with this single truth compare
That God was man in Pelestine
And lives today in bread and wine.*

Mike

(Mike Knott, Stourport Wesley)



Donkey

Sheep are mentioned 410 times in The Bible, the goat 169 times, the horse 166 times and finally the Donkey 153 times. God gave Adam the job of naming all the animals, so how he came up with them is anybody's guess. His big mistake was to name a snake which tricked him and Eve to eat from a forbidden tree. They had to leave The Garden of Eden forever. Riding on a donkey?

Now the donkey played a big part in the life of Jesus. Loading a donkey plus a few possessions, a donkey carried Mary from Nazareth to Bethlehem where Joseph was to be counted in a census. Although there is no evidence that Jesus was born in a stable, the donkey would be thereabouts. Then came the flight to Egypt and eventually back home to Nazareth. If a family had only one donkey, Mary would ride with Jesus in her arms while Joseph walked alongside.

The donkey was a beast of burden in biblical times. Nothing like the ones you see on the beach today. It was a beautiful, graceful and friendly animal with a reddish-brown coat. They were held in high esteem and were a measure of people's wealth. For the purpose of riding, a saddle would be tied on the donkey's back with a simple halter to serve as a bridle. This is how Jesus would have found it as He rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. The donkey was a symbol of humility and peace, just what Jesus portrayed. However, the Old Testament had a surprise for us – a donkey who talked!

If you want the story, it's Numbers 22,23 and 24, but basically Balak was at war with Israel and sent Balaam, a soothsayer, to put a curse on them. Balaam set off on a donkey but the donkey saw an angel on the road and twice it shied away finally laying down on the road. Balaam started to beat the donkey but the lord allowed him to speak "What have I done to make you beat me three times?" Balaam said "You have made a fool of me". Then the donkey said "Do I usually behave like this? I've been a good servant to you." Balaam admitted he had but then found out it was God speaking through the donkey as a warning to him. So through The Bible the humble donkey is a good friend of ours. Alas, not for Absalom who when fleeing from David on a donkey, his long hair got tangled in an oak tree and strangled him. However, the donkey has to finish this story on a high note. A man was going from Jerusalem to Jericho and was attacked and beaten by robbers. Many men passed by on the other side of the road, but a Samaritan took pity on him and bandaged his wounds. He then put him on his donkey and carried him to an inn where he was cared for. This Samaritan showed kindness and it is fitting that once again the donkey was prominent. Of course, we were to become the lions led by a man on a donkey.

Mike

Mike's Smile Lines

Darling you could be a Saint

What Saint?

A Saint Bernard.

**

Q. Why did the farmer, the scarecrow and the physicist share the Nobel prize?

A. They were all outstanding in their fields

**

Consider an egg in a monastery, out of the frying pan into the friar.

**

I replaced every window in my house, then found I had a crack in my glasses.

**

I thought the BBC programmes were getting better till the wife told me she had replaced the T.V. with a fish tank.

**

Just think if marriage became outlawed, only outlaws would have in laws.

**

Fred: My wife's a kleptomaniac.

Bert: Is she taking anything for it?

**

If you cross a four-leaf clover with a poison ivy would you get a rash of good luck.

**

Man: could I have a single ticket to Jeopardy?

Clerk: Sorry, there's no such place as Jeopardy.

Man: But it says in my paper there are a million jobs in jeopardy.

**

There was an epitaph on a famous snooker player's grave – He's taken the long rest.

**

An old lady was visiting Cornwall and said "That's St. Michaels Mount, how come I thought it was a racehorse owned by Marks and Spencer?"

**

Q. What happens when you immerse a body in 10 gallons of water.

A. The telephone rings.

**

The London Philharmonic orchestra were playing The Bermuda Rhapsody when suddenly the triangle player disappeared.

**

My wife thought a kipper was a fish that slept a lot. There again, she thought a Bar-B-Que was a line of men waiting for a haircut.

**

Eve was so jealous of Adam that when he came home at night she used to count his ribs.

**

A budget is something we go without to stay within.



Two Seasonal Poems.

THE BARN

"I am tired of this barn!" said the colt.
"And every day it snows.
Outside there's no grass any more
and icicles grow on my nose.
I am tired of hearing the cows
breathing and talking together.
I am sick of these clucking hens.
I hate stables and winter weather!"

"Hush, little colt," said the mare
"and a story I will tell
of a barn like this one of ours
and the wonders that there befell.
It was weather much like this,
and the beasts stood as we are stand now
in the warm good dark of the barn –
a horse and an ass and a cow."

"And sheep?" asked the colt. "Yes, sheep,
and a pig and a goat and a hen.
All of the beasts of the barnyard,
the usual servants of men.
And into their midst came a lady
and she was as cold as death,
but the animals leaned above her
and made her warm with their breath.

"There was her baby born
and laid to sleep in the hay,
while music flooded the rafters
and the barn was as light as day.
and angels and kings and shepherds
came to worship the babe from afar,
and we look at him first of all creatures
by the bright strange light of a star!"

Elizabeth Coatsworth

THE DAY AFTER THE DAY AFTER BOXING DAY

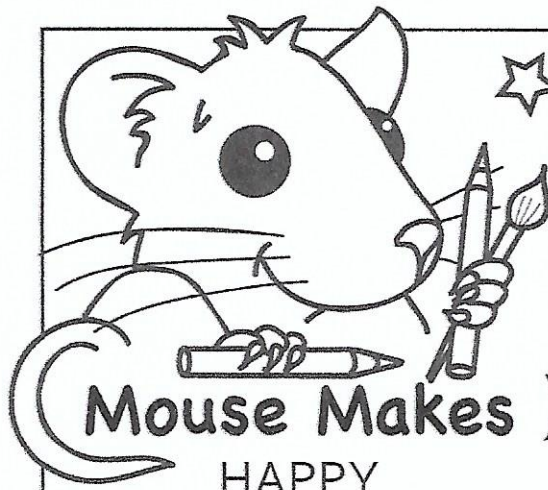
On the day after the day after Boxing Day
Santa wakes up eventually,
puts away his big red suit and wellies,
lets Rudolph and the gang into the meadow
then shaves his head and his beard.
he puts on his new cool sunglasses,
baggy blue Bermuda shorts (he's sick of red),
yellow stripy T-shirt that doesn't quite cover his belly
and lets his toes breathe in flip-flops.

Packing a bucket and spade,
fifteen tubes Factor Twenty suncream
and seventeen romantic novels
he fills his Walkman with the latest sounds
is glad to use a suitcase instead of the old sack
and heads off into the Mediterranean sunrise.

Six months later
relaxed feeling red and a little more stubbly,
he looks at his watch, adjusts his wide brimmed hat
mops the sweat from his brow and strokes his chin
wondering why holidays always seem to go so quickly.

Paul Cookson





Mouse Makes

**HAPPY
CHRISTMAS!**

Read the Christmas story
in **Luke 2:1-21**.

Answer the questions, colour
the picture and colour one
star each day until Christmas.

Where was
Mary's baby born?
Why were Joseph
and Mary there?

What did
Mary dress
her baby in?

Where did
Mary lay
her baby
and why?

Why were the
shepherds
afraid?

What good
news did
the angel tell?

What
did the
shepherds
do after they
had seen the
baby?

Who
appeared
praising God,
what did they
say?

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



ALL • DECREE • JOSEPH • DAVID • BETHLEHEM • MARY • BIRTH • SON • LAID • MANGER
 INN • SHEPHERDS • FLOCK • NIGHT • LORD • GLORY • GOOD NEWS • JOY • DAY
 SAVIOUR • CHRIST • SIGN • BABY • GOD • PEACE • ANGELS • GO • SEE • TOLD • PRAISE

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

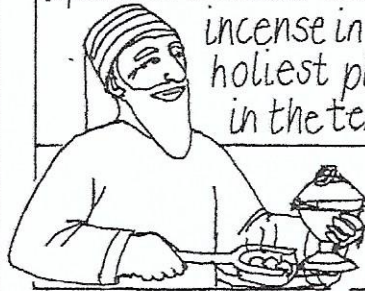
It can be read in the Bible in
Luke ch.1 verses 1-25 & 57-80

The Romans had invaded Israel and still ruled it. Zechariah and Elizabeth were an old childless couple living in the hill country.



It was Zechariah's turn for temple duty in Jerusalem.

He was given a once-in-a-lifetime chance to burn incense in the holiest place in the temple



As it burnt he prayed



Lord God, please rescue us, your people.

Then he saw the angel standing next to him



God has heard your prayer, and you will have a son.

At our age that's not going to happen



To show you that God means what He says..

you will be unable to speak until your son, John*, is born



*In Hebrew, 'John' is 'Yochanan' or 'God is gracious'

When Zechariah came out of the holy place..



What happened?

He went home and soon Elizabeth had good news



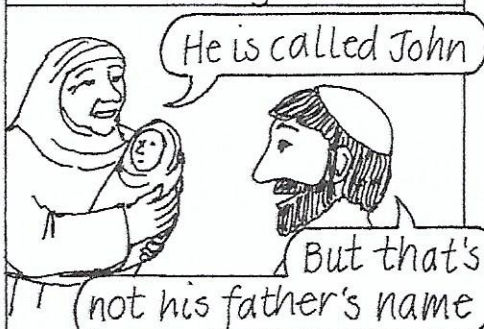
I'm pregnant!

Elizabeth's cousin Mary visited her...



but left before..

Elizabeth's baby was born.



He is called John

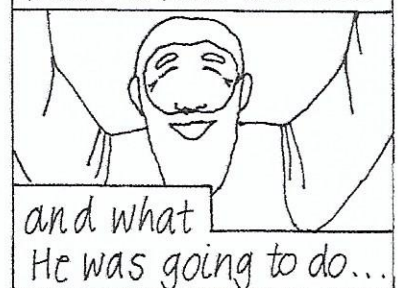
But that's not his father's name

Zechariah wrote...



and could speak again.

He praised God for what He had done...



and what He was going to do...

First sermon in British Sign Language at St Paul's Cathedral

A Baptist minister, the Revd Sue Whalley, has recently delivered the first ever known sermon in British Sign Language (BSL) at St Paul's Cathedral.

The invitation grew out of a meeting in London between Deaf Church Leaders and Church of England Clergy. Building on the momentum of the BSL Act last April (when British Sign Language was accepted as an official language in England and Wales), it was suggested that a Deaf person preach at St Paul's Cathedral.

A maximum of 30 Deaf people were expected to attend alongside the hearing visitors to the cathedral. But instead, 60- 70 Deaf people turned up, "highlighting the importance and significance of the event."

Parish Pump 2022

Are you dreading some Christmas presents?

Do you expect to like all the presents you will receive this year? Not if last year was anything to go by! In fact, it seems that more than two-thirds of us expect that we will unwrap at least one item that we do not like this Christmas.

What do you do with those weird gifts? One in four of us admit to dumping them – straight into the bin. Yet we are very polite about it – two in five of us pretend delight so that we do not hurt anyone's feelings. Only one in ten of us is ruthlessly honest and express our disappointment.

A better way of getting rid of unwanted presents is to donate them to charity. Charity shops will welcome almost any kind of unwanted Christmas present.

Parish Pump 2022

All in the month of DECEMBER

It was:

200 years ago, on 27th December 1822 that Louis Pasteur, French biologist, microbiologist, and chemist was born. One of the fathers of germ theory, he was best known for the pasteurisation process, which is named in his honour.

100 years ago, on 14th December 1922 that John Reith (later Lord Reith) was appointed as General Manager of the BBC. 90 years ago, on 25th December 1932 that the first Royal Christmas Message was broadcast on radio. King George V addressed the nation live from Sandringham.

80 years ago, on 1st December 1942 that the British Government published the Beveridge Report, which formed the basis of the welfare state.

65 years ago, on 25th December 1957 that Queen Elizabeth II's Christmas message was televised for the first time.

50 years ago, on 22nd December 1972 that 14 people were found alive in the Andes more than two months after their plane crashed. They had survived by eating dead passengers.

40 years ago, on 12th December 1982 that 30,000 women joined hands around the Greenham Common RAF base in Berkshire to protest against the siting of US Cruise missiles there.

25 years ago, on 11th December 1997 that the Kyoto Protocol, aimed at reducing greenhouse gases and combating global warming, was adopted at a conference in Japan. More than 190 countries have signed the agreement, which came into effect in February 2005.

10 years ago, on 9th December 2012 that Patrick Moore, British astronomer, television presenter and musician died. Best known for hosting the astronomy series *The Sky at Night* (1957-2013) the longest-running TV series with the same presenter.

Parish Pump 2022

The mysterious ways of mistletoe

Mistletoe has long been used as part of our Christmas decorations. It is not your usual kind of plant.

Instead, it is *hemiparasitic*, meaning that although its leaves enable it to feed itself through photosynthesis, its roots invade the host tree or shrub to extract water and other nutrients. Mistletoe loves living in apple, lime, hawthorn, poplar or oak trees. You may spot it high up, as a large globe, on the bare trees in winter. There is one spectacular example in Windsor Great Park, clearly visible from the path on the opposite side of the Thames.

Mistletoe's berries are almost translucent, fleshy and sticky. They form in the forks of mistletoe's many branches. While they are toxic to humans, they are attractive to birds, who wipe the remaining seeds off their beaks onto the nearest branch, which of course helps the plant to spread.

For some reason, Romans thought mistletoe represented Peace, Love and Understanding. Perhaps that is how it got into our Christmas celebrations? The earliest documentary evidence for kissing under mistletoe dates from the 16th century, but we don't know who got kissed first.

Parish Pump 2022

Crossword answers

ACROSS: 1, Hide. 3, Disgrace. 9, Sonship. 10, Oaths. 11, Tutti. 12, Ignore. 14, Foreknowledge. 17, Ashram. 19, Men or. 22, Aroma. 23, Nineveh. 24, Amethyst. 25, Trod. **DOWN:** 1, His staff. 2, Do not. 4, Imprisonments. 5, Groan. 6, Altered. 7, Easy. 8, Shrink. 13, Searched. 15, Restore. 16, Lament. 18, Reach. 20, Never. 21, Jada.



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

Parish Pump Smile Lines

I am terrified of the Santa at the shopping centre where I work. Our HR lady talked it over with me, and has discovered I am Claustrophobic.

**

Richard, my husband, and I had a hectic Christmas holiday schedule involving work, care of parents, driving of teenagers, shopping, and all the required doings of the season. Running out of time, I asked a local printer to simply print our name on our Christmas cards, to save me signing each one.

Soon we started getting cards from friends signed 'The Modest Morrisons', 'The Clever Clarks', and 'The Successful Smiths'. This baffled me until I looked again at our card. I had posted out a hundred cards neatly imprinted with 'Happy Holidays from the Rich Armstrongs'.

**

A Sunday school teacher asked her class, "What was Jesus' mother's name?"

One child answered, "Mary."

The teacher then asked, "Who knows what Jesus' father's name was?"

Another child ventured: "Verge?"

Confused, the teacher asked, "Where did you get that?"

He replied hesitantly: "Well, you know they are always talking about Verge n' Mary."

**

After the christening of his baby brother in church, young Jason sobbed all the way home in the back seat of the car. His father asked him three times what was wrong. Finally, the boy replied, "That minister said he wanted us to be brought up in a good Christian home, but I want to stay with you guys."

**

A mother took her young daughter to visit Father Christmas in his grotto at the garden centre. He greeted the youngster merrily and asked: "And what would you like for Christmas?"

The little girl stared at him, open-mouthed with horror. "Didn't you get my email?!"

~~~~~







*...love the new notice board, Vicar...  
...just not quite so sure about the wording...*

# Conexus

Tuition

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Wednesday 4pm - 6pm

Key Stage 1 and 2

English, Maths, Science

and SATs Prep.

£32 for two hours of tuition

Small groups -

maximum of six per tutor

Limited availability

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# TRINITY LUNCHEON CLUB

Trinity Methodist Church, Kidderminster

Every Wednesday at 12.15

Would you like a mid-week meal cooked for you with pleasant friendly company round the table?

Then why not come to our **Luncheon Club** – you don't have to be a church member or on your own, couples are welcome.

Enjoy a delicious main course and pudding with tea or coffee.

**Only £3.00**

## Our main courses include:

**Meat Loaf    Salmon Flan    Chicken Casserole**

**Corned Beef Flan    Sausages**

**Ham and Pineapple    Cheese and Bacon Flan**

and our puddings (naughty but very nice):

**Cheesecake    Bakewell Tart    Sponge Pudding**

**Fruit Crumble    Sticky Toffee**

**Passion Pudding    Bread & Butter Pudding**

For more information or to book a place please contact  
Mrs. Jill Green via 07580009755 (between 9am and 5pm)

**THURSDAY**

*Slimming*  
-WORLD

**SLIMMING WORLD GROUPS**

**FOLEY PARK METHODIST CHURCH**

**OFF BRINTONS CLOSE**

**KIDDERMINSTER**

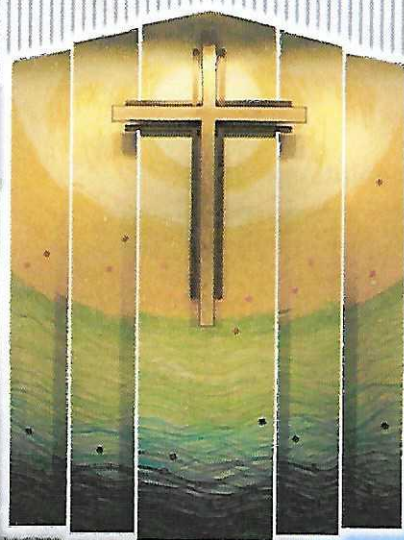
**9.30AM OR 11AM**

**CALL SANDRA**

**0777 2522 129**







♦ Trinity Methodist Church ♦



### **Sunday Services**

- Morning Worship at 10.30am
- Evening Worship at 6.30pm

**Mid-Week Lunchtime Service at Trinity**  
Every Thursday 12.30pm – 1.00pm

### **Trinity Toddlers** **Every Tuesday**

9.45am – 11.15am

Contact:

Mrs Stella Batson - 01562 863503

Rev'd. Nick Collison - 01562 823300

### **Trinity** **Luncheon Club** **Every Wednesday** at 12.15pm

Co-ordinator:  
Mrs. Jill Green

Trinity Methodist Church, Churchfields, Kidderminster, DY10 2 JL  
Telephone: 07580 009755 (Mon-Fri 9am -5pm)  
[www.trinitymethodistkidderminster.org.uk](http://www.trinitymethodistkidderminster.org.uk)

2022...2022