

# The Mag in December

The monthly magazine from Adeyfield Free Church.



2023

# Nativity





## A Christmas Message from Pastor Paul

I am starting to see places that are being decorated, Christmas scenes are everywhere, and the song 'It's beginning to feel a lot like Christmas' rings out.

I spoke to my brother in America and they are already getting snow. For some of us it would be wonderful to experience snowflakes, and for some plenty of sunshine would do wonders. But our Christmas programs are ready to roll. For many, this is a time for lots of activity.

This one month during the year we take time to journey back to Bethlehem.

We recite our history and remember how we arrived at this place of faith.

We need the yearly reminder.



Christmas reminds us first of all, that God is the One who initiated our relationship with Him. He is the One who reached out to us. He sent Jesus. He decided to enter our world when it surely would have been easier for God just to let us destroy ourselves and then create another world.



Christmas reminds us that in the gospel message Jesus identifies with the ordinary people. The principal players in the Christmas story are Mary and Joseph who were both poor and most likely very young. There were the Shepherds who were

pretty much social outcasts. There were the foreigners (the Magi) who came to worship the King.

In addition, much of the activity took place in a stable. By the means of Christ's coming, God was extending an invitation to everyone, not just a few.

In this one historic act God extended love to those who had been cast off by the world. He offered healing to those who were enslaved to their past failure. And He offered a new beginning to those who felt they were beyond hope. God sent a clear message: He has not given up on us.



The Christmas story also reminds us that God invites us to participate in the Christmas story. He invites us to respond to Jesus. Mary said, "Yes", Joseph said, "I will", the shepherds said, "Let's go", the Magi brought gifts, the Innkeeper made a place in the stable, and the Angels sang.

I invite you to reflect anew on God's mercy. Find hope in His message and contemplate how you will respond to God's invitation.

***Brandon, Hannah and I wish you all  
a Blessed Christmas and a wonderful  
and Prosperous New Year.***





From the Editor.....

Here we are again looking towards Christmas with what I am guessing could be very mixed emotions. The news of the terrible conflict in Israel and Gaza heightens our attention on what is called the Holy Land. Someone said to me recently that they will find singing carols very difficult this year because of the terrible violence and loss of life.

We may tend to think of the nativity story, which we watch children perform every year or which we see on our Christmas cards, as comforting, exciting, familiar, even sometimes cosy with the warmth from the animals and the snug manger. Jesus looking very gorgeous as He smiles at His mother, the lamp light and the angels. But the reality could probably have been nearer the scenes we see today. Fear, worry, loss, threatening soldiers, the presence of the invading army from Rome, the violence of Herod's searching to kill the interloper king, the flight into Egypt and the years of being aliens without a homeland. That is the reason I think we should sing our carols with even more conviction than usual. We must make sure we do everything in our power to let those we come into contact with hear that what God did in the birth of our Saviour is the only answer to what we are seeing on the news.

God spoke into a prayer meeting at AFC some years ago that our mission is to birth the Saviour into the community. We are part of the nativity of Jesus every day of the year and what a wonderful privilege it is. So, let's enjoy every part of Christmas including the food, the parties, the singing, the gift giving, the decorations and the Nativity, Carols and Christingle services. Let's make it a wonderful act of thanksgiving to God and an opportunity for Him to recommission us for 2024.

God bless you all this Christmas and in the New Year.



**Quiz Question 1... In Jesus' time the holy land was divided into 2 sections. Israel and.....?**

## Nativity



As Andy Williams sang “It’s the most wonderful time of the year.” Despite being winter, the shops and streets are brighter at Christmas time. People, who normally never go to church, will sing carols and watch a children’s nativity and, perhaps, even be prepared to hear about Jesus. One may see a nativity scene with the baby Jesus watched over by Mary, Joseph and an angel, a shepherd with a lamb on one side and the three wise men with their gifts on the other. It’s all very lovely and this is a problem as we are denying the reality of the situation.



At the time of the birth of Jesus, Judah was occupied by the Romans. Mary Beard, the eminent historian, when asked

if she would like to have lived in ancient Rome replied “Absolutely not, it was a cruel and painful world.” Because of a decree by the Roman emperor, Mary, although near her time, was forced to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem. There, she gave birth in a stable. Not the charming event depicted in our modern nativity scene but a smelly, noisy place surrounded by animals, dirt and, quite likely, fleas. And, don’t forget, a child born out of wedlock.

Herod, the self-styled ‘king of the Jews’, was determined to kill any rival to his throne. Joseph and Mary, together with their new born child, fled to Egypt as refugees. They eventually returned to Nazareth where, although the Bible gives us no information, Jesus appears to have had a happy childhood surrounded by his brothers and sisters. At some point, Joseph must have died and, I am sure, Jesus would have grieved for him.

The Gospel accounts tell us about the ministry of Jesus and how he experienced times of pleasure and pain. Only a week after being hailed as the Messiah, he was betrayed and deserted by those closest to him. Finally, following a sham of a trial, Jesus endured the most horrific form of execution devised by men. I was once at a talk where we were shown the picture of a jewel encrusted cross. Someone in the audience murmured “Isn’t it beautiful.” Of course, the real cross was anything but beautiful.



The Bible tells us that Jesus was criticised for mixing with tax collectors, prostitutes and sinners. I believe that Jesus had to do this.

So there we have Jesus, the Son of God, the Messiah and the sacrificial Lamb who died for all of us. Illegitimate, low born in an occupied land, a refugee, at home with the dregs of society, betrayed and crucified, He also knew pleasure together with the pain.

Why did God allow this? Jesus was fully God but He was also fully Man. In order to die for our sins, He had to experience everything that we may experience.

Therefore, enjoy this festive season but remember that the baby in the manger grew up to atone for our sins and praise and thank God for this.

*Brian Jackson*

**Quiz question 2.. ....What was the name of the old woman who prophesied over the baby Jesus?**

## **The cattle are lowing, the poor baby wakes But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes**

*Zem T.*

*I know I'm taking a lot of artistic licence, but I'd like to imagine it went down something like this...*

The little calf stared in amazement, his large brown eyes twinkling in wonder, barely blinking in case he missed something! He watched the tiny baby wrapped up snugly and held oh so gently by His mother. For a king he looked so vulnerable, and yet there was no doubt that's who he was – a mighty King, heralded by angels and stars, worshipped and honoured by rich and poor alike, all drawn to this small dark stable now alive with light. Something very, very special had occurred tonight and the little calf determined that he was going to share the wonder and amazement of it with everyone that he met. And that's exactly what he did.



Now, he'd had a front stall position, as the grown-ups did what all good grown-ups do, and stepped to the back letting all the young ones have the best view, and being the youngest, he got the best view of all. This meant he would be able to tell everyone exactly what happened. Everything seemed to happen so quickly, so he started by checking with all other calves to make sure they hadn't missed anything. It turned out that was a good thing because Daisy had actually fallen asleep and missed it all. Her little tummy was full of warm milk, and nestled into the warm dry straw had been just too much for her, and she drifted into a gentle sleep. At first, she was disappointed when she realised she'd missed such a big occasion, but the little calf retold it so vividly it was as though she was seeing it all for herself. Her large brown eyes twinkled with wonder as she giggled and bellowed softly with excitement.



Encouraged by this, the little calf felt brave and confident, so he went to the grown-ups. After all, most of them had had a very restricted view from the back of the stable. They too listened with awe and amazement as the little calf retold his story. He talked with such passion and excitement that they too felt like they'd had a front stall position and let out a gentle bellow of amazement. Emboldened still further the little calf approached the mums-to-be. He knew how difficult it was for them to find a comfy position to lie in, and

that as they did lie down, how much care each of them took to protect the little unborn calf inside their belly. They looked so peaceful that the little calf wondered if he should wake them or leave them to carry on sleeping. He thought for a moment before deciding waking them was the way to go, after all he had such exceptional news he was sure they would want to know. They were grumpy at being woken, it had taken them ages to doze off, but as the little calf shared his story they too began to share his excitement. As he talked, the little calf painted such a picture, that it was as if they were seeing it for themselves, and they too let out a gentle bellow in wonder.

And so, the little calf continued with his work. The events of that wondrous evening burnt brightly in his memory and his whole body seemed to be filled with it too, so much so that it was impossible for him not to share it with everyone he met. He told the new born calves, he told the lambs and the ewes, he told the kids and the goats, no one was to be left out. And, as he did so each of them was struck with awe and wonder at the birth of such a mighty King. The little calf was filled with such joy



because he had this good news to share, and he was sure he would do this for the rest of his life!

One day the farmer came into the stable. All the animals stood to attention before falling silent. The farmer looked about him until he spotted the little calf, who by this time was not quite so little. He went towards the young calf and spoke softly to him, gently rubbing his shoulders and back. Next the farmer felt the muscles at the top of the calf's legs and checked his hooves; he looked at him

square in the face, and then smiled. The calf let out a sigh of relief, but this was all too short lived.

"You're a fine looking young beast" said the farmer, "tomorrow I'll get you out in the fields, get you working". Then he was gone.

"What!" thought the calf "But I have a job, I have my life's work. How can I go into the field, surely this is where I belong, where I am needed. There are still so many animals who need to hear the Good News of the Saviour's birth." But it was all to no avail.

The calf was awoken early the next morning, and his eyes were sticky with sleep. There was a chill to the air and his breathe froze as he exhaled. But he did get the pick of the fresh hay, which was nice. It was sweet and fresh, and made a pleasant change from the tougher stuff which was usually what was left by the time he had his breakfast, plus it hadn't been flattened by over enthusiastic working oxen either, so the calf reckoned that was a bonus at least.

Suddenly he was blinded by a shaft of bright light as the stable door swung open. A blast of sharp cold air woke him abruptly from his



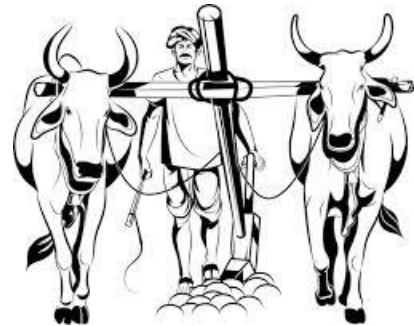
sleepiness, and he wished he was still snuggled in his bed of straw. That, he determined was much better than any fresh hay.

One of the older oxen looked over towards the young calf with pity. “Don’t worry” he said with a reassuring nod, “It’s always a shock on the first day, but you’ll soon get used to it, it’s really not that bad. Besides you’re with me today and I’ll take good care of you.”

He went on to explain to the young calf how the farmer would put a harness on to the two of them, and how he, as the more experienced animal would be taking most of the weight, and that really all the young calf would need to do would be to walk alongside him. He assured the calf that he would go slowly and make sure he could find his footing, and that he would generally look out for the youngster. After all that was just as it had been for him in his own younger days.

The ground was cold and hard under foot, the ox sometimes struggled to cut the ground as he pulled the heavy metal plough behind him, his feet stumbled occasionally, but he was true to his word and took good care of his young charge. As they walked side by side the ox explained that they were preparing the soil ready for sowing, that although it was cold and hard now, it was full of potential. This was all new to the young calf, so he listened quietly. None of this made any sense to him, and he would still rather be in bed, but maybe it would all make more sense in time.

And so it was that the two walked side by side, chatting quietly. Over the days and weeks, they got to talking more and more. The young calf even got to share the Good News with his new friend – that was something he never imagined as the oxen and calves normally didn’t have anything to do with one another. It just wasn’t the done



thing. The ox listened as he worked, and he heard the passion and excitement in his young friend’s voice. It was as though he was seeing this special night for himself and he resolved to share it with all the other oxen that very night, and tell them all about the birth of the saviour.

And so it was that the days and months passed. Dark mornings gave way to bright sunrises, chill white skies gave way to blue, and the hard earth under foot became soft. The young calf watched as the oxen helped the farmer to sow the fields, and then helped him to water them. He looked with curiosity as green shoots appeared from the earth and grew into tall and strangely shaped plants laden with equally strange looking blooms that his friend called seeds, and all the while the two walked together side by side.

The sun grew hotter in the sky, and the plants grew taller and heavier, until they looked almost as if they would explode. It was then that the ox explained how they would help the farmer to cut the plants, that the seed from them would be used to make bread for the farmer and his family, and for the people in the town too, and how all the animals would benefit also because the farmer would carefully cut and dry the remains of the plant, and store it to provide food for them during those months when nothing grew. And yet this was not all, the ox explained how some of the seed would be kept back and planted the following year, how the whole cycle would repeat itself over the year, and for many years to come.

Suddenly the young calf, who was not so young by now, realised that actually he didn't mind this work, and would really like to take on a bit more responsibility himself, surely it was about time he started to help his friend and lift some of the weight from his shoulders. It was then that he understood his work blessed all the animals in the stable, the lambs and ewes, and the kids and the goats in the fields, the other oxen, the farmer and his whole family, and the people of the town. Once again, he was filled with much joy.



***This is just a silly story I know, but how often are we reluctant to step out of our comfort zone. We know the Lord has placed us there for a good reason, and any notion of moving outside that fills us with doubt and confusion, and maybe even a bit of stubbornness. But He knows so much more than we can ever know, He knows exactly how He wants to use each of us, and He knows the potential that we each have. It's so tempting to stay within the safety of what we know, but unless we take a deep breath and step out into the unknown, we won't discover what else the Lord has in store for us, then we don't receive the blessing that brings or see the blessing it might be for others.***



Photo by [Ben White](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Dear friends,

It feels like everyone is getting ready, getting ready for Christmas. Christmas Trees going up (even as I write!) cards being written, presents being bought, menus being planned and food being bought. Although sadly, and increasingly, for some they are not able to prepare to celebrate and certainly not in the way they might have hoped. They have a deep concern as to how they can simply heat their homes and feed their families this winter. That is if they even have a home to live and eat in.

In the past I have had the privilege of volunteering at a winter night shelter. What struck me was that everyone's story was different as to how they found themselves homeless. It taught me not to make assumptions. Some had been estranged from their families, got behind with their rents and evicted, couldn't afford to put together a deposit despite working, experienced broken relationships and so the stories could go on.

Some churches will be hosting winter night shelters, arranging warm hubs and providing hot drinks and meals to not just those who are homeless, but also to the lonely and vulnerable. As Christians we cannot close our eyes and ears to the needs around us as we prepare to celebrate Christmas. We cannot welcome Jesus and shun our neighbour. As Jesus himself said 'Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

The nature of Jesus' birth highlights who these brothers and sisters are. Jesus himself was born homeless with parents who were dependent on the

charity of others to give them shelter and food. The story worsens as the family had to flee and become refugees in Egypt. Yes, Jesus was a refugee! When we fail to look out for those in need, we are hurting God.

Today our hearts and the heart of God is breaking looking at what is happening in the place of Jesus' birth. The violence and suffering in Israel and Palestine makes us stop and think, pray and act even as we prepare for Christmas. In our sanitised Christmas we usually miss out the story of the massacre of the innocents just after Jesus's birth which is recounted in Matthew's Gospel. But we can't turn a blind eye to the massacre of the innocents in the current conflict.

Martin Leckebusch in his variant of a popular carol, 'O West Bank town of Bethlehem', asks the question:

'How violently, how violently  
the hope of peace is riven;  
can God impart to these torn hearts  
the blessings of his heaven ?

Who now recalls his coming to this dark world of sin?'

As Christians we believe that peace is possible, the hungry can be fed and the homeless find shelter. And we can work together to achieve it and thus truly remember and celebrate the God who came to earth as a baby to transform a troubled world.

I would like to wish you a peaceful Christmas as you celebrate and seek to play your part in bringing about transformation in this world.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George".

Synod Moderator

# WHEN YOU PRAY



Peace in Israel and Gaza



Peace in Ukraine



Peace in Syria



Peace in the whole Middle East



Peace in Africa



Peace in the Americas



Peace in Australasia



Peace in India



Peace in the Far East



Peace in all the islands



Peace in the depths of our being

**Quiz question 3 Which book of the Old Testament tells the birthplace of the Messiah?**

## **Results from the Prayer Morning October 14th**

These are the messages and scriptures that were received during prayer on the 14<sup>th</sup> October when we came to ask the Lord for guidance relating to our Children and Youth work and any other areas of church life.

### **Children and Youth**

Matthew 7:7..... Ask, seek, knock..... praying for the Youth and Family workers that they and we will know who is right for us and right for them.

For the Youth Worker..... Ruth 2:8-12 Boaz... which means Ability. Praying for a Boaz that will open to our youth access to Jesus, His life and His victory over any barriers that they may meet.

For the Children/Families worker.... Praying we will find the person God has ready for us. Someone who is deeply in love with Jesus and everything He is to families..... He is the glue that holds relationships together.

That the children will want to come to church each Sunday. This will be a time of making friends, learning to love each other and Jesus. Fun and fellowship.

May we respect, encourage and love our youth in this room and in all of the church.

Prayer for your future plans that you have for youth and young people in this place many years ahead long after we have gone.

## Safety

Praying for importance of safety. Whilst it remains critical that everyone is safe at AFC I feel we should pray that it is seen and perceived to be safe. That young people would know this is a safe escape from whatever is troubling them. That all would know they will be safe here [physically, sexually etc] but also safe to ask questions and to explore the meaning of life.

## The Lord and His presence and influence

2 Corinthians 3:17. Now the Lord is The Spirit and where The Spirit of The Lord is there is liberty.

Psalm 32:8 I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go. I will counsel you and watch over you.

Praying Jesus' presence in the Atrium area as people enter they would sense His presence.

Deuteronomy 30:19-20 Now choose life so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to His voice and hold fast to Him.

Praying the life of the Holy Spirit brings into all our work in the building, life into the children and youth work, life and prosperity.

Speaking these words into the foundation of our building and the foundation of everything that will take place here. 'choose life'.



## Christmas Pie

*Once you've finished raiding the cold meat from Christmas day for sandwiches, cold meat and bubble and squeak, salad etc you might want to try this if you haven't already done so. It's delicious, economical and great for your self-esteem [you haven't wasted any food].*

- Left over turkey, ham or any other meat you really don't want to throw away.
- Left over stuffing, or sage if you have none
- Left over veggies not eaten hot.
- Onions or onion sauce mix/Cornflour if you aren't using the sauce mix
- Milk
- Butter or margarine
- Grated cheese [I would use strong cheddar but that's just me]
- Potatoes

Chop up all the leftovers you have, season lightly with a little salt.

Make up enough onion sauce to cover all the chopped-up leftovers. [if making your own fry the finely chopped onions in a little butter and put to one side. Make a roue with the milk and cornflower then gradually add milk over the heat while whisking all the time until the sauce is the consistency of thick pouring cream, stir in the onions and simmer for a couple of minutes stirring all the time]

Add all the leftovers to the sauce and stir until everything is coated.

Place in a baking dish.

Boil the potatoes and cream them. OR..... Parboil the potatoes for about 10 minutes and thickly slice them.

Spread the potatoes over the top of the leftovers and sauce

Cover with a generous amount of grated cheese and bake in the oven 180 or Gas 6 for about 15 to 20 minutes or until the cheese has melted and begun to crisp around the edges.

Serve with anything you like..... YUM



I am just a young girl, my name's Mary  
I'm much too young to worry  
Mum and Dad have found me a nice young man  
And' we've started the wedding plans  
But when God calls you, you have to obey  
If you love Him, you go His way  
No wedding Day, no wedding gown, no canopy  
No quiet life for me.



I am just a carpenter from Nazareth  
I'm very skilled with the saw and the lathe  
I was set to marry a nice young girl  
And we've started the wedding plans  
But when God calls you, you have to obey  
If you love Him, you go His way  
No wedding day, no wedding feast, no canopy  
No quiet life for me.





## Christmas Rissoles

*Mum used to make rissoles on Mondays with the cold meat from Sunday. I have adapted it at Christmas. Another way to save and use leftovers.*

- Cold meat leftover from Christmas Day
- Onions
- Left over stuffing or sage
- Salt and pepper
- Egg
- A little flour
- Margarine/lard or oil

Mince the meat and the onions.

Crumble up the leftover stuffing if you are using that

Mix up the meat, onions and sage/stuffing.

Season with a pinch of salt and pepper.

Mix in a little beaten egg and a little flour to bind the mixture together into a rough consistency.

Lightly flour your hands then squeeze portions of the mixture to make patties about the diameter of your palm and about the thickness of your thumb.

Fry the rissoles in hot oil, lard or margarine until they are crisp on both sides.

Serve hot with salad, vegetables or chips, pickles, mustard or sauce.....YUM

*This can be adapted by adding curry flavours, chillies or different herbs at the mixing stage.*

***What do you get if you eat Christmas decorations?***

***Tinsilitis!***





## Iced Christmas Pudding

*From Barbara J.*

This is a Mary Berry recipe for an iced Christmas pudding although you can have it as a delicious homemade ice cream in the summer.

To serve eight, you will need a 1.75 litre pudding bowl.

### **Ingredients:**

175g mixed dried fruit,

60g ready-to-eat dried apricots chopped,

60g glace cherries halved,

3 tbsp brandy (for the children, I substitute cranberry juice),

3 eggs,

125g caster sugar,

450ml milk,

450ml double cream,

150ml single cream.



Combine the dried fruit, apricots, glace cherries and brandy, cover and leave to soak for eight hours.



In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs and sugar. Heat the milk in a heavy saucepan to just below boiling point, pour into the egg mixture, stirring.



Pour back into the pan. Cook gently, stirring with a wooden spoon, until the froth disappears and the mixture thickens. Do not boil. Remove from the heat and leave to cool.



Whip 300ml double cream and the single cream together until they are just beginning to hold their shape. Fold into the custard with the fruit and brandy mixture.



Turn into a shallow freezer-proof container and freeze for two hours or until beginning to set but still slightly soft.



Remove the pudding from the freezer and mix well to distribute the fruit evenly. Spoon into the pudding bowl.



Cover and return to the freezer. Freeze for three hours or until firm.



Remove from the freezer about twenty minutes before serving to soften. Turn out on to a serving plate and spoon the remaining cream, lightly whipped, on top. Slice and serve at once.

I hope you enjoy it!



## June R's Stilton Soup

*Whenever we have had a soupy supper at church this has always been a winner*

5gm butter

1 onion finely chopped

2 celery sticks chopped

40gm flour

45ml dry white wine

900ml chicken stock

300 ml milk

100 gm blue stilton cheese crumbled

50gm English cheddar

Salt and freshly ground pepper

60 ml double cream

Croutons

Melt the butter in a saucepan, add the vegetables and fry for 5 minutes. Stir in the flour and cook for 1 minute.

Remove from the heat. Stir in the wine and stock. Return to the heat, bring to the boil and simmer for 30 minutes.

Add the milk and cheeses stirring constantly. Season. Stir in the fresh cream. Rub through a sieve or put through a blender.

Reheat without boiling. Serve with croutons.



**Free Money Management course happening 4<sup>th</sup>  
December. See our Mag December supplement for  
details.**

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



# Mag Wordsearch

APPAREL-ASLEEP-AWAY-BEARING-BLEAK-BOUGHS-  
 BRIGHT-CAROL-CRIB-CROWN-DECK-DOWN-FLOCKS-  
 GENTLEMEN-GLORY-HALLS-HERALD-HOLLY-IRON-  
 JOLLY-LITTLE-LOOKED-MANGER-MOAN-ORIENT-  
 RECONCILED-REST-SEASON-SEATED-TRAVERSE-TREES-  
 WATCHED-WATER-WOOD-YULETIDE-

Which Carols are represented in the wordsearch? See Answers Page.

*How did Mary and Joseph know Jesus' weight when he was born?*

*They had a weigh in a manger.*

## Colouring Pictures



- Quiz questions..**
- 4 How long were Mary, Joseph and Jesus refugees in Egypt?**
  - 5. How many Lords were a-leaping in ‘The 12 days of Christmas’?**
  - 6. Where does the Trafalgar Square Christmas tree come from?**
  - 7. Where did we first discover turkey?**



## Youth Assembly 2024

Each year the URC Youth Assembly brings together a diverse group of under-25s from across Scotland, England and Wales for a weekend of business and fun combined, exploring issues and topics relevant to Church, society and life through workshops, seminars, discussions and creative activities. It is a weekend to have your say, make friends and find fellowship. In 2024 the Youth Assembly will be held at Whitemoor Lakes, Alrewas, Staffs from 26 to 28 January and is for all young people associated with the United Reformed Church in any way. The age range is from Year 10 (England and Wales)/S3 (Scotland) up to and including 25.

The cost from November 14 is £149. For young people and leaders in Thames North who book before 8th December, the cost is FREE! Please contact Lorraine once you have booked your place via the link below. There is a creche available for children aged 0 to 5.

Book your place at [linktr.ee/urcyouthassembly2024](https://linktr.ee/urcyouthassembly2024) or contact [children.youth@urc.org.uk](mailto:children.youth@urc.org.uk) for a booking form.

**LEADERS' GATHERING:** Alongside Youth Assembly, by popular demand, we will be running the Youth Leaders Gathering. For all those who work with young people in URC settings, this will be a chance to meet with others to be encouraged, challenged, inspired and equipped through a mixture of input, worship, space to relax, prayer and social time. For and leaders in Thames North who book before 8th December, the cost is **FREE!** Please contact Lorraine once you have booked your place via the link below. There is a creche available for children aged 0 to 5.

<https://linktr.ee/urcyouthleadersgathering>

**Quiz question.8...** Who invented the Nativity play? **9....** What does Immanuel mean? **10....** Which Roman Emperor called the census?



# Answers

**Quiz questions**.... 1.... Israel and Judah. 2.... Anna. 3.... Micah.  
4..... 2 years. 5....10 Lords a-leaping. 6... Norwegian government.  
7..... North America. 8... St Francis. 9... God with us.  
10. Caesar Augustus.



**Wordsearch Carols** ..... Deck the Halls..... Away in a manger.....  
Hark the herald angels sing..... In the bleak midwinter.....While  
shepherds watched.....We three kings.....The holly and the ivy....God rest  
you merry

***What carol is heard in the desert? 'O camel ye faithful!'***

## Poem for Nativity

Did they have a donkey to carry Mary Bethlehem bound?  
Can shepherds protect their flocks while sitting on the ground?  
Was it really a silent night or were the streets with shouts aloud?  
Could a star lead such a distance never obscured by a cloud?  
Did the baby in the manger never utter a cry?  
What would you think if you saw angels flying in the sky?  
The writers of the carols may let their imaginations soar  
But it certainly was a wondrous event when Jesus Mary bore  
*Brian Jackson, November*

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## December Services 10 am

**3<sup>rd</sup>.... 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent**

**10<sup>th</sup> ... Communion Service followed by Christmas Lunch**

**17<sup>th</sup>... Nativity Service**

**4.30 pm Carols and meditations around the manger**

**24<sup>th</sup>... Christingle**

**25<sup>th</sup>... Christmas Morning Service [check newsletter for time]**

**31<sup>st</sup>... 10.30 Joint service at St George's.**

***What did the stamp say to the Christmas card? Stick with me and we'll go places!***