

The Highlander

December 2014

**“This very day in David’s town
your Saviour was born - Christ
the Lord!”**

Luke 2 : 11



Sunday Worship in December 2014

7th Advent 2	9.00	Holy Communion - Rev Julia Monaghan
	10.30	Morning Worship - Andrew Thomas
14th Advent 3	10.30	Parade Service - Worship Leaders Toy and Gift Service
21st Advent 4	10.30	Holy Communion - Rev Julia Monaghan
	4.00	Carol Service - Rev Julia Monaghan
28th	10.30	Leigh Section United Service at Highlands - Rev Julia Monaghan

**“S Club” meets at 10.30 am every Sunday
Sunday Club for Children - Crèche available**

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**Highlands Methodist Church
Hospitality in the Midst of our Community**

Minister	Rev. Julia Monaghan	483827
Secretary to Church Council	Credwyn Tolhurst	557070
Church Stewards	Ros Bryant	478631
	Credwyn Tolhurst	557070
	Lesley/Andrew Hyde	473111
	Janette/Rob Land	477507
Worship Leaders	Jennifer Courtenay	556140
	Frank Edmonds	525250
Church Treasurer	Janet Watson	555702
Property Co-ordinator	Anne Lane	01268 565644
	e-mail: annelane8@btinternet.com	
S Club Leaders	Jean Edmonds	525250
	Ros Bryant	478631
Pastoral Co-ordinator	Maureen Kelly	556152
Church Flowers	Jean Burgess	556278
Lettings/Use of Premises	Les Davis	558381

All items for the **January 2015** issue of *The Highlander* should be handed in writing to **Frank Edmonds** (or put in the "E" section of the pigeon box in Jubilee Room) latest 10.30 a.m. **Sunday 14th December**. Preferably, items may be emailed to frank66thecroft@sky.com *The Highlander* will be ready for distribution on **Sunday 21st December**.



Letter from your Minister:-

Born in the Night, a long way from your home.....

Very few of the carols that we love to sing at this time of year are actually addressed to Jesus. Many are an encouragement to ourselves, to praise God, and “come and worship”; others are addressed to Mary, to angels, to Bethlehem even; and still others fall under the heading of narrative, telling the story in a dramatic way such as “*We three Kings of Orient are.*” Geoffrey Ainger’s 1964 carol, “*Born in the night, Mary’s child, a long way from your home,*” is therefore a rare treat, forming as it does a reverential prayer to Jesus.

It may appear at initial hearing that Ainger is telling us that Jesus was born in the middle of the night and I usually make the most of this reference by ensuring that we sing it at midnight communion on Christmas Eve. That angels appear to the shepherds by night and the wise men follow the star, all lead us to the conclusion of Jesus’ birth in a stable, under a clear midnight sky.

And of course he might well have been. What do I know? However, as my Youth Alpha Group at Belfairs like to remind me, everything is symbol and there is a richness to the story, if only we would take time to look beneath the obvious and search within for hidden layers of meaning too.

The “night,” for example could be a metaphorical night - the nighttime of the world - a dark time when Christ, light of the world, would appear. References to “*your cross of wood,*” in the third verse, remind us of its truth in spiritual terms. Christ came as Isaiah prophesied, to a people who walked in darkness.

In the first verse too we read of Jesus “*coming in need,*” which could be a sign of the helplessness of Jesus the baby, needing parental care, love and acceptance, or equally it could refer to a world in need of a Saviour. The carol closes with a call that Jesus might “*walk in our streets again.*” This could both refer to His future second coming and that Christ walks among us by His Spirit, wherever there is vulnerability, suffering, darkness.

This year the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that the number of refugees world wide would exceed 50 million for the first time since World War II. Up until last year the country hosting the most refugees was Pakistan, with Afghanistan being the largest source country, a position it has held for 33 years. This year, however, an estimated 6.5 million people have been displaced in Syria, with the main host countries being Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey.

The Syrian crisis has become the largest humanitarian emergency of our era and it would seem to me that Ainger’s hymn has particular resonance this Christmas. 50% of the refugees are under 18 years and there will be a significant number of babies being “*born in the night, a long way from your home, coming in need.*”

P.T.O.

For them, as for us, how important it is therefore to hear that “*God is good*” and for God to “*prove it is true*” by going to a “*cross of wood*”. That there is hope, goodness, empathy, love proved and redemption. That in the darkest places God is –

*“light of the world,
Mary’s Child,
dawn on our darkened day.”*

Rev Julia

December 2014

Section Advent Session

Monday 15th December at 2.00pm

At Highlands Methodist Church

“Unpacking the Carols”

Led by Rev Julia Monaghan

Come and discover the stories behind the Carols,
sing some carols and enjoy hospitality together

All are Welcome

Christmas at Highlands 2014



Sunday 14th December - Parade and Toy Service
(Toys to Women’s Refuge)

Sunday 21st December - Carols by Candlelight Service

Christmas Eve - Christingle Service at 5.00 pm v

Christmas Eve - Midnight Communion (at Wesley)

Christmas Day - Morning Service at Highlands

Sunday 28th December - Section Service at Highlands



Prayer

We pray for our friends who are ill, housebound or bereaved and for Joan Field in residential care at *Merrie Loots Farm*. Our thoughts and prayers are with them and their families at this time.

Riding Lights

On Wednesday 3rd December Riding Lights, a professional theatre company will present a pantomime entitled "*Goose Chase*". This is a Leigh Section event to be performed at Highlands.

See poster for details. **Get your tickets now !!**

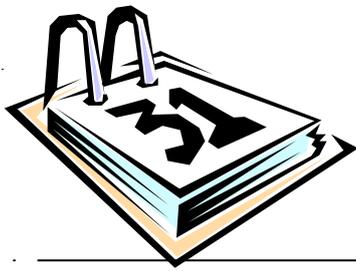


Church Christmas Card

This year there will be an opportunity to sign a card to all your friends at Highlands and make a donation to charity in lieu of sending several cards. This facility will be available from Advent Sunday.

Flower Rota for December 2014

<u>Date</u>	<u>Donated by</u>	<u>In memory of</u>	<u>Arranged by</u>
7th			
14th	Frank & Jean Edmonds	Frank's Dad	Jean Edmonds
21st	Jennifer Courtenay	Parents	Mary Barter
28th			



Dates to Remember

Craft Group

We would like to thank everyone who kindly donated items and money for the Samaritan's Purse Christmas boxes which were dedicated at the November Church Parade. It was a splendid effort and we very much appreciate all the thought and work undertaken by our friends. Well done everybody!

Please remember to save your used postage stamps this Christmas. Please leave a small margin of paper around them, address them to Evelyn and leave them in the appropriate pigeon hole in the Jubilee Room. These will later be passed on to Salvo the Clown who collects them for Muscular Dystrophy funds.

Action for Children

Thank you to those who attended the recent coffee morning. The amount raised was £40 which has now been sent to Head office.

MOTHs

We next meet on Tuesday 2nd December at 7.30 for 7.45 pm. when the Badminton Players will entertain with poetry and readings. It is rumoured that Father Christmas will make an appearance to collect Christmas gifts for the Women's Refuge.

In January Kelly Renolds will tell us of the chequered history of the Cliffs Pavilion and Palace Theatre.

Highlands Hobbies

Our Christmas Party will be held on 4th December from 10.00 to 12.00 with games and seasonal refreshments. Everyone is welcome. (Further details from Jean Edmonds or Credwyn Tolhurst)



Table Tennis

If you enjoy a game of table tennis come and have fun on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, 9th December at 7.30 pm in the Church Hall.

ABRSM Exams

The exams continue from 1st to 5th December from 9.00 am to 6.00 pm.

Anybody willing to help as a Steward please see Les Davis or Ros Bryant.



Property and Finance

Members are reminded that the next meeting is on Monday 1st December at 8.00 pm in the Church

Other Highlands Dates for Your Diary

Friday 12th December — Southend Mencap Concert

Circuit Events

*The Circuit website :- " www.southendandleigh.org "
also contains details of Circuit events,
prayers, contacts and the Circuit Plan*

Tuesday 9th December — MWIB Circuit Advent event at Highlands
Saturday 20th December - Energize Puppets Christmas Show at Belfairs

Alternative Worship

Belfairs Methodist Church - "Thirsty For ???" - 2nd Thursday
Next date — 11th December at 7.00 pm

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Wesley Methodist Church - Creative Worship - 4th Tuesday
Next date - 27th January 2015 at 8.00pm

Saturday Coffee Mornings

6th December

13th December

Senior Section

20th December

Church

27th December

The Highlands Nativity Trail - Is there room at The Inn?

Once again your favourite Nativity Characters are seeking Baby Jesus. They have got lost round the Highlands Shops and need your help in finding their way. Go and see if you can find which shop the shepherds, wise men, the angel, and the sheep are in. See if Mary and Joseph are moving in the right direction towards the stable in Highlands church.

They will have until the 24th December 2013, to get there. The trail will be open in the shops from the beginning of December onwards, and the trail sheets to help you locate the characters, can be found at Highlands Methodist Church.

To enter make a small donation and all money raised will go to the Ebola Appeal.



Toy and Gift Service

During our Parade Service on 7th December gifts will be received to be sent to the Women's refuge in Southend to be distributed to less fortunate boys and girls. Any donations of tinned and dried food will be passed on to the Storehouse in Southend as were our Harvest Gifts. Thank you for all your donations.

Serving the Homeless / H.A.R.P.

Our Evening of Light Jazz with DBJQ at Our Lady of Lourdes Hall was a fantastic success in a delightful setting. Together with Raffle proceeds we raised £864.81. Thank you for your support.

Our regular Christmas Music Evening at St Barnabas Church will take place on Friday 19th December. All are welcome. No tickets but donations will be gratefully received at the back of the church or during the refreshments after.

The popular Lunch at the Park View Suite has been booked for 18th January 2015. get it in the diary. More details later.

As Winter approaches the weather will get colder for those living on the streets and your gifts of food and clothing are warmly welcomed by HARP

Thank you once again for all your supportive prayers and the gifts at the back of the church.

Winter Night Shelter

The Saturday evening facility will this year be provided at Whittingham Avenue Methodist Church. The first evening for which we are responsible with Wesley is 6th December and preparations are well advanced. Donations of warm clothing, hats, scarves, gloves etc are still required. If you feel that you would like to help in any way with this desperately needed facility please talk with Credwyn Tolhurst or Janet Watson

News from the new Rainbow unit

We are very pleased to welcome 15 girls to the new Rainbow unit. We had our first meeting on Wed 12th November and meeting times are 4 - 5p.m.. The girls had games and started to make a picture of a rainbow. Karen Packer is the Leader sorting out the paperwork and helping to run the games and singing and Dilys is sorting out the crafts etc. We have 3 Mums helping and also a D of E volunteer. The Rainbows will have their last meeting before Christmas on the 10th Dec. We hope that some of the Rainbows will come along to the Toy Service on the 14th Dec. The Rainbows restart on Wed. 14th January 2015.

10th Leigh Brownies

10th Leigh Brownies have had quite a busy term. We welcomed 8 new girls in to our unit. We had a great visit to RSPB Rainham Marshes with the other Brownies in the District. The Brownies that went gained their Wildlife Explorer and Out & About badges. The RSPB staff looked after us very well and nobody fell in while pond dipping!!! The Brownies made some collages for the Highlands Harvest service and were able to put them towards their Autumn season badge. They went out to collect the items for their collages and also did some apple and pear tastings. The Brownies have also done their Fire Safety badge. They did some work in the hall and then had a visit to Leigh Fire station. The firemen and woman, showed the Brownies around a fire engine and the rescue inflatable boat they use. The girls also had a go at using the hoses to put out a pretend fire. The leaders also enjoyed the visit and thank the fire people for looking after us. Wed 5th November found the Brownies and their family enjoying fireworks and hot dogs at Guideacres. We were joined by 18th Leigh Brownies & Guides. the weather was kind to us and a great evening was had by all. Thanks go to Colin and Andrew for putting on a great display for us. We made a profit of £25 and decided to donate it to Children in Need. 6 Brownies represented the Unit at the Division Brownie Rose-bowl competition, which was held at St Michael's Church. They had to make things to do with a party and the theme was the Brownie centenary. They did not win but were in joint third place. On Sat 15th Nov the Brownies went over to Grove Wood School, Rayleigh and had a craft day with the rest of the Division. They had different activities to do called the Seahorse Challenge. They made lots of things and came away with a lovely badge shaped like a seahorse. The 19th November will find the Brownies having fun at Kids Kingdom. Our local activity centre - Guideacres - is running this as a fundraising event. It is open to all sections from Southend East and West Guide Divisions. Our last meeting before Christmas will be on Wed 10th Dec and we will be saying 'Goodbye' to 2 of our Brownies. We will be at the Highlands Toy Service on the 14th Dec. We will be restarting on Wed. 14th January 2015.





Methodist Women in Britain

Circuit Advent Day

Tuesday 9th December 2014 at 10.30 am

Highlands Methodist Church

Craft activities include card making, flower arranging, singing, dance and creative writing.

To be followed by a Soup Lunch and an Advent Service at 2.00

Please join us for all or part of the day
MEN AND WOMEN WILL BE WELCOME

Mike Bishop

Interior Decorator
Painter, Paper Hanging etc.
Free Estimates

Mobile: 07967 177598

The Methodist Church in general and Highlands Methodist Church in particular does not endorse the services of any commercial enterprise advertising in this publication

Riding Lights Theatre Company
presents

GOOSE CHASE

a feather-flying tale of the first
Christmas

WED 3RD DECEMBER
7.00pm

HIGHLANDS METHODIST CHURCH
Sutherland Boulevard, Leigh-on-Sea, SS9 3PT

Tickets: £6 / £4 (concs) / £18 (group/family of 4)
BOX OFFICE: 01702 711851

Polly Dunbar

written by Antony Dunn
directed by Paul Burbridge

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RIDING
THEATRE
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LIGHTS

Serving the Community 7 Days a Week

