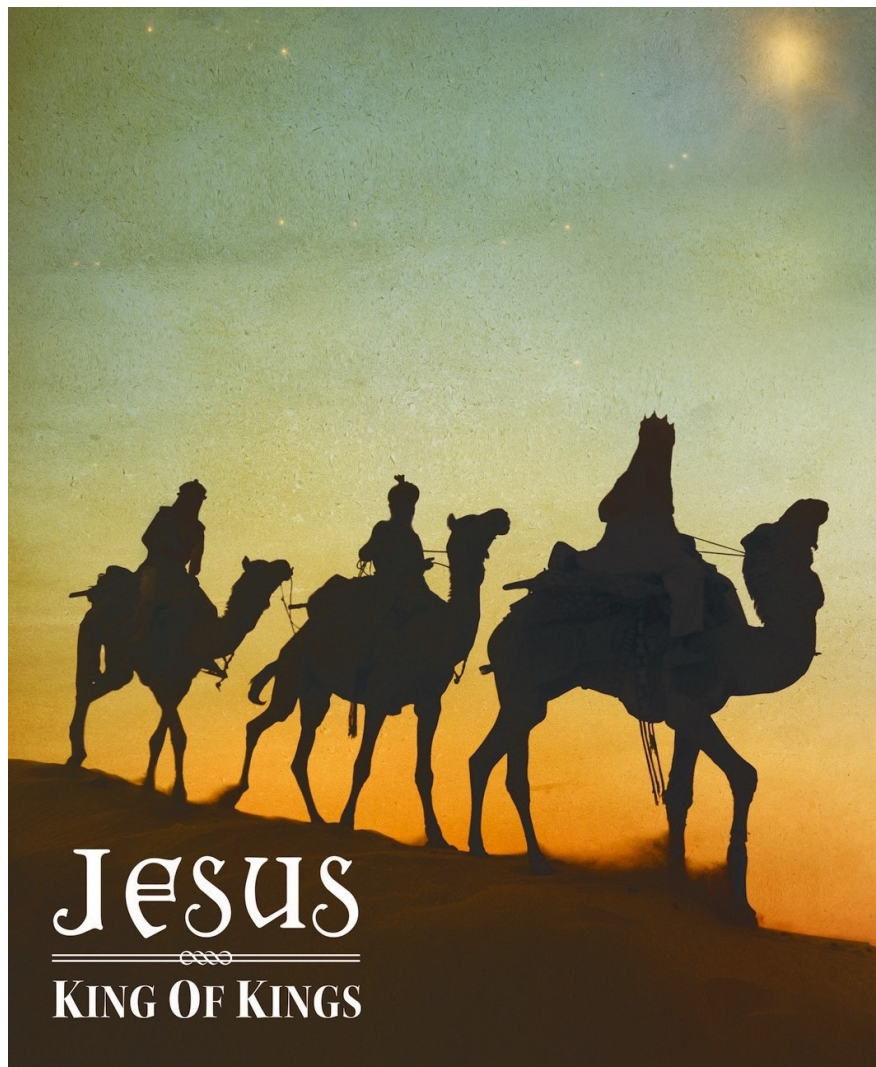




**December 2021  
and  
January 2022**



**Bush Hill Park United Reformed Church**  
**25 Main Avenue, Enfield EN1 1DJ**

[www.bhpurc.org.uk](http://www.bhpurc.org.uk)



## Who to contact

### Serving Elders

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Diann Nicolaides	020 8292 1094	diann.nicolaides@bhpurc.org.uk
Robin Ward (Secretary)	07962 207 256	secretary@bhpurc.org.uk

### Youth activities

Boys Brigade	bb@bhpurc.org.uk
Girls Brigade	gb@bhpurc.org.uk

### Other activities

Baby & Toddlers	toddlers@bhpurc.org.uk
Book Club	bookclub@bhpurc.org.uk

Weekly news sheet	link@bhpurc.org.uk
Newsletter	newsletter@bhpurc.org.uk
Hall & Room bookings	bookings@bhpurc.org.uk
Prayer requests	prayer@bhpurc.org.uk



*The Bush Hill Park URC Newsletter is published monthly. To receive email notifications please email [newsletter@bhpurc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@bhpurc.org.uk)*

*Please note that the views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of the whole fellowship or representative of church policy.*

### Safeguarding Statement

*Bush Hill Park United Reformed Church believes that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all those who are vulnerable (children, young people and adults at risk).*

*We expect all of our leaders, volunteers and those who use our premises to share this commitment and value the support of those who worship here in achieving this. Park United Reformed Church believes that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all those who are vulnerable (children, young people and adults at risk).*

*Please visit <https://www.bhpurc.org.uk/about-us/safeguarding> for further information.*

Dear Friends,

How quickly 2021 has sped by! At least that is the way that it has seemed to me. Here we are now just a few weeks before Christmas. How are your preparations going? Are you the type of person who starts planning in January, or is everything a last minute rush? I suspect that, despite my best intentions, I fall into the latter category!

Does the thought of Christmas fill you with excited anticipation, or a sense of panic and anxiety? In 2020 most of us had to have a very different Christmas season because of Covid 19. No drinks with friends and neighbours, no school or office parties, no large family gatherings. Limited access to shops to buy gifts and food and no Boxing Day sales, unless you went online. However, did you in fact, (secretly, maybe) prefer this simpler, less hectic way of celebrating? After all, Christmas began very simply - a baby born in a stable and placed in an animal food trough as a cradle. There were celebrations of course – a host of heavenly angels singing in the sky; shepherds praising God and wise men travelling hundreds of miles to bring expensive gifts for

the child. However, the focus was entirely on Jesus.

The four weeks of Advent provide us with an opportunity to prepare spiritual for Christmas and remember what this season is really all about. We look back in celebration to Jesus coming at the first Christmas and forward in expectation to his second coming.

The Bible Study Group\* has just started a book of reflections entitled 'Unexpected Jesus' by Anna Robbins,\*\* for the Advent season. It begins by talking about how 'not as expected' experiences can be positive and negative. In the case of Jesus' life, he totally exceeded the expectation of what he would be and do. For some, though, like the Pharisees, he was the total

opposite of what they thought a Messiah should be and that is why they rejected him. For others, the poor, disabled and disadvantaged he was the best news ever. But all those who met him 'never left unchallenged or unchanged. For many, the encounter carried the potential of total and unexpected transformation.'

We are asked in the book, 'What are your expectations this Advent?' Reference is made to the words of the 18th century poet Alexander Pope:

'Blessed are those who expect nothing, for they will never be disappointed.'

How true!

So, should we be raising our expectations of what we can receive from God, our loving

Father? Are we trusting him to be with us and to provide the strength and guidance for whatever we have to deal with in the coming months, whether as individuals or churches? Are we ready to be challenged, to change, develop or do things in a different way? Are we prepared for the unexpected?

May God bless us all this Christmas time and in the year ahead.

Rosemary  
Christ Church

\*The Zoom Bible Study Group is open to anyone who would like to join. Dates and joining instructions are available from Rosemary:  
[secretary@ccurc.org.uk](mailto:secretary@ccurc.org.uk)

\*\* 'Unexpected Jesus' by Anna Robbins, Cover to Cover series published by CWR.org.uk



## Smile Lines

### **Snowmen**

Two snowmen were standing next to each other. One said to the other: "Can you smell carrots?"

### **New bank**

Mother decided that ten-year old Cathy should get something 'practical' for Christmas. "Suppose we open a savings account for you?" she suggested. Cathy was delighted. "It's your account, darling," mother said as they arrived at the bank, "so you fill out the application." Cathy was doing fine until she came to the space for 'Name of your former bank.' After a slight hesitation, she put down 'Piggy'.

### **Split**

A professor was lecturing his physics class. "If molecules can be split into atoms and the atoms split into electrons, can the electrons be broken down any further?"

"I'm not certain," replied one of his pupils, "But a sure way to find out would be to post some of them in a Christmas package marked 'fragile.'"

### **STAR**

At a rehearsal for a Sunday school Christmas tableau, the teacher carefully lined up four little 'cherubs'. Each carried a huge cut-out letter. As they stood side by side, the letters would spell out "STAR". A slight mix-up occurred, and those present in the church auditorium nearly fell out of their pews as the four little performers took their places - in reverse.

## Here is the News

### **THANK YOU!**

We would both like to thank all our churches for their kind gifts over the past few weeks, and for the many different opportunities we have had to say “goodbye”.

We will be thinking of you often on the other side of the world, and hope to be back to visit sometime soon.

Lots of love and prayers,  
Mark and Melanie

### **Crisis grows in Lebanon**

“Now that Christmas is approaching, many families are worrying that by then, they won’t even be able to provide a home or food for their children.” – The words of a Lebanese Christian leader.

Lebanon’s crippled economy has reached such a low point that state-supplied electricity has dwindled to almost zero, so that extended blackouts engulf all without private generators. Fuel, whether for generators or cars, is becoming increasingly scarce, and so expensive that many cannot buy it even when available. Shelter and warmth are not the only problem. Food is a challenge too. Already many families are going without meals in a time of hunger unlike anything in living memory in Lebanon.

If you would like to send some food and medical support to Lebanese Christians this Christmas, please go to Barnabas Fund at <https://barnabasfund.org>.

### **The Nativity in your window?**

This Christmas, why not think about putting a Nativity scene in your front window, to remind passers-by of the real reason for Christmas? And next Easter, you could put up a Christian poster or a Christian cross in your front window.



## **Start cycling or walking**

Even if it's just to do a few errands on the weekends instead of driving, taking a taxi, or taking the bus. Most big cities have bicycle sharing programs for people who aren't owners.

## **Help Christians in the Middle East**

The charity Embrace the Middle East works to support Christians in the Middle East, for whom life is often very tough.

A spokesman for the charity says: "We support our Christian partners, as they work to transform lives. Where there is a need – for refuge, a home, for health care, for education, for justice and human rights – we, with our partners, aim to respond."

Embrace currently has 50 partners in the region. "All are working to help those most forgotten and on the margins; all are inspired by the Gospel."

More details at: <https://embraceme.org/information-for-churches>

## **Haiti still struggling after earthquake**

The recent 7.2 magnitude earthquake and Tropical Depression Grace that hit Haiti (in August) left 2,189 people dead, with a further 12,200 injured, and at least 129,000 homes either damaged or completely destroyed.

Following the disaster, All We Can and the Methodist Church in Britain launched an appeal to support those affected. They have sent emergency food supplies (including rice, oil and beans), water purification tablets, sanitary equipment and temporary shelter materials. Additionally, they have sent seeds and tools for the winter agriculture season.

This Christmas, if you would like to support the Haiti Emergency Earthquake Appeal, please visit [allwecan.org.uk/Haiti](http://allwecan.org.uk/Haiti).

## **Waste Warriors**

Vikkie and the Thompson family continue their food waste tips, picked up from participating on Channel 4's Cook Clever, Waste Less with Prue & Rupy which first aired on the 27th May.

Some of the tips you may already do, which is awesome, keep that up, but for others, this may all be new ideas for you. Continue to reduce your waste in as many ways as possible to help the planet and the environment for the younger generations that come after you. Good luck!

Vikkie and the Thompson Waste Warriors

### **Tip 12: Portion control**

People leave approximately 6% of home-cooked meals on their plate. This doubles to 12% when people are eating pre-prepared meals.

53% of people think that takeaway/dining out portions are unnecessarily large. (Source - BBC Studios' Science Unit).

If you're intending to make enough for tonight's dinner and tomorrow's lunch, portion it out before you even sit down to eat. It's much harder to stop eating and there's still food on your plate!

With 1/3 of consumers not checking portion size on labels, this can cause us to eat far more of our favourite sugary and fatty snacks than intended. Try not to eat straight out of the bag and premeasure portions to make your snacks go further, as well as limiting how much you eat.

### **Tip 13: Takeaways**

In 2018, the average household threw away nearly one tenth (9%) of takeaway food they ordered.

One in four consumers (25%) said that more than half the time when they ordered a takeaway, they had leftovers that ended up in the bin.

The most common cause of unintentionally ordering larger portions than they needed, with rice and chips the most wasted food. (Source - BBC Studios' Science Unit).

**Chinese** – white rice - it is possible to reheat rice safely. Cool the rice as quickly as possible (ideally within one hour). Keep rice in the fridge no more than one day until reheating. When you reheat rice, always check that it's steaming hot the way through. Do not reheat rice more than once.

**Indian** – Cheat's Biriyanī– stir raw rice and leftover curry together and cover with hot water/stock. Bake in oven for a very easy and quick dinner.

**Chippy** – leftover chips can be frozen on a lined baking tray before bagging up. Reheat in a deep fryer or hot oven until crisp and piping hot again.

**Pizza** – add a glass of water if reheating pizza in the microwave, this will help the base stay crisp and the cheese melt.

## **Tip 14: Down the drain**

Having spent half a day in Southend looking at 'Fat bergs' and how the water company clean the sewers, we were reminded what food waste not to put down our drains.

When loading your dishwasher, remember to scrape off all excess food into the food bin (even if it's the tiniest amount). Use a piece of kitchen paper to wipe the surface clean before putting it in the dishwasher. This ensures the least amount of food waste goes down the drain. (Try and use one piece of kitchen paper to wipe all dishes clean, to ensure limited waste).

If rinsing off in the sink, make sure you have a food collector over the sinkhole to catch any small amounts of food. Once finished rinsing, put all the collected food into the food waste bin.

Never, never, never put cooking fat, or oil down the drain. Use a food jar with a lid, to collect any of these. If in Enfield, small quantities of hard fat can be added to your household food bin if you have a collection (which is your small brown bin). Once the jar is full of liquid fat you should dispose of the jar in a recycling centre (Barrowell Green takes these).

According to the North London Waste Authority, once the liquid fat is collected, the oil will be converted into high quality biofuel for the distribution and power generation industries.

You can always compost old cooking oil at home, but you must make sure it's mixed well with paper and cardboard first.



## **A celebration of remembrance**

Lights of Love is an opportunity to remember those you love by dedicating a heart to those who have, or still do, light up your life. Reflect on those who have touched your life and showed you love whether through a fond memory, words of love or hopes for the future.

Every loving dedication we receive will be part of our centre's Lights of Love window display throughout December, entered into our Dedication Book and light up the life of someone touched by cancer.

Always in our thoughts. Always in our hearts.

For more information visit

<https://www.nightingalesupport.org.uk/product/lights-of-love/>



## Help a prisoner give their child a present this Christmas

Angel Tree gives parents in prison the opportunity to send a Christmas present to their children. In 2020, the scheme sent out over 4,400 gifts.



Christmas is especially difficult for prisoners and their children. Angel Tree lessens the devastation experienced because of parental absence by not only helping families connect, but by providing children with much-needed joy.

Prison Fellowship volunteers work with prison chaplains and local churches to buy, wrap and deliver the presents. As long as a prisoner is allowed access to their children, they are given the opportunity to apply for a gift to be sent to them.

Each gift is dispatched as though it is from the parent in prison and is accompanied by a personal message written by the parent for their child to make the gift extra special. The parent is also given the option of including an age-appropriate Christian story book in their child's gift.

"I can't tell you in words how much my kids are happy. I can only say from my heart, you didn't send gifts, you sent happiness and smiles."  
– A Dad in prison



Visit <https://prisonfellowship.org.uk/our-work/angel-tree/>



Shake out those  
Christmas Jumpers,  
hats, and scarves

Wear them to church



Sunday 19th December

10:00am

A family time of worship and  
praise.

Donations to  
Save the children



and  
UNICEF



# Amazed!

Some people like surprises. The pleasant ones, anyway!

When we look at the Christmas story, it is full of surprises. Mary didn't expect to be chosen by God to give birth to His Son. Joseph was surprised and shocked that his fiancée was pregnant. The couple thought they would start married life together in Nazareth, but political circumstances forced them to go to Bethlehem and then into Egypt.

The Bethlehem shepherds were surprised and frightened by the heavenly choir and an angel with a marvellous message. Later, they rejoiced at seeing the Saviour – a new born baby in a manger.

The Wise Men were surprised to see a unique star, and so they followed it all the way to Jerusalem. They thought a royal birth would be in a city and in Herod's Palace. They were surprised again, to be redirected to a remote village called Bethlehem. Herod too was surprised that a new king had come, and felt his position and authority were being threatened.

What is most surprising is that God had planned the coming of Jesus thousands of years before it happened. Prophets had told of His coming and their hearers were waiting for Him to appear. But still they were surprised when the Messiah came, for He did not come as a conquering hero but as a suffering Servant.

Jesus came to save people from their sins. He came to restore a broken relationship and bring His people to a glorious Home. The biggest surprise? It was also done for you and me!

Lester Amann

# Diary

## December 2021 and January 2022

See also Prayer pages and back cover for regular activities

The diary is also online at [www.bhpurc.org.uk/calendar](http://www.bhpurc.org.uk/calendar)

<b>December</b>		
Sun 5th	10:00am	Advent Communion with Revd Mark Meatcher
Mon 6th	10:30am	Book club in the church
Thur 9th	11:00am	Friends group in the church
Sat 11th	3:00pm	Family Film Feast, see page 20 for details
Sun 12th	10:00am	Advent Parade with Barrie Thompson
Sun 19th	10:00am 4:00pm	Worship with Christine Hall, see page 12 Family Carol Service
Mon 20th	7:30pm	Beer and Carols at the Little Green Dragon, see p 28
Thur 23rd	11:00am	Friends group in the church
Fri 24th	11:30pm	Communion at Christmas led by Revd Martin Legg
Sat 25th	10:00am	Christmas Celebration led by Lisa Hamblin
Sun 26th	10:30am	United Worship at Christ Church URC
<b>January</b>		
Sun 2nd	10:00am	Communion with Martin Hamblin
Mon 3rd	10:30am	Book club in the church
Sun 9th	10:00am	Parade with Chris Stratta from Leprosy Mission
Thur 13th	11:00am	Friends group in the church
Sun 16th	10:00am	Worship with Laura Marlow
Sun 23rd	10:00am	Worship with Martin Wells
Thur 27th	11:00am	Friends group in the church
Sun 30th	11:15am	Worship with Eddie Boon at Christ Church

# Prayer Diary

DECEMBER 2021

The Word became flesh  
and made his dwelling among us.

We have seen his glory,  
the glory of the one and only Son,  
who came from the Father,  
full of grace and truth.

John 1:14

## **Wednesday 1st**

Harman Road

## **Thursday 2nd**

For a more eco attitude to buy  
Fairtrade

## **Friday 3rd**

The work of North Enfield Food-  
bank (we support them)

## **Saturday 4th**

Sunday's Worship Leader and the  
service tomorrow

## **Sunday 5th**

Give thanks for those who help  
with Kings Club

## **Monday 6th**

Fred

## **Tuesday 7th**

Worship God for his holiness

## **Wednesday 8th**

Harrow Avenue

## **Thursday 9th**

For a more eco attitude to re-  
duce, re-use and recycle

## **Friday 10th**

Elijah, our sponsored child in  
Zambia

## **Saturday 11th**

Sunday's Worship Leader and  
the service tomorrow

## **Sunday 12th**

Thanks for our ambulance, medi-  
cal services and the air ambu-  
lance helping to save lives

**Monday 13th**

Gertrude

**Tuesday 14th**

Worship God for his glory

**Wednesday 15th**

Hadrians Ride

**Thursday 16th**

For a more eco attitude to my carbon footprint

**Friday 17th**

Crime reduction initiatives

**Saturday 18th**

Sunday's Worship Leader and the service tomorrow

**Sunday 19th**

Give thanks for the hard won freedoms we enjoy in the UK

**Monday 20th**

Ivy

**Tuesday 21st**

Worship God for his beauty

**Wednesday 22nd**

Halstead Road

**Thursday 23rd**

For a more eco attitude to the cleaning products I use

**Friday 24th**

Children and staff at Al-Shurooq School in Bethlehem who we support as a church

**Saturday 25th**

Happy Christmas!

Today's Worship Leader and the service today

**Sunday 26th**

Give thanks for Jesus

**Monday 27th**

Jane

**Tuesday 28th**

Worship God for his majesty

**Wednesday 29th**

Hazelwood Road

**Thursday 30th**

For a more eco attitude to eat less meat

**Friday 31st**

Those suffering from Parkinson's and the charities who seek to find a cure



# Prayer Diary

JANUARY 2022

Even to your old age and grey hairs I am he,  
I am he who will sustain you.  
I have made you and I will carry you;  
I will sustain you and I will rescue you.

Isaiah 46:4

## **Saturday 1st**

Sunday's Worship Leader and the service tomorrow

## **Sunday 2nd**

Give thanks for those who lead and help with Boys and Girls brigade

## **Monday 3rd**

Jill

## **Tuesday 4th**

That God will send people to us to help in his mission for Bush Hill Park

## **Wednesday 5th**

James Street

## **Thursday 6th**

For our Queen

## **Friday 7th**

Children and staff at Al-Shurooq School in Bethlehem who we support as a church

## **Saturday 8th**

Sunday's Worship Leader and the service tomorrow

## **Sunday 9th**

Give thanks for our homes and the shelter we have

## **Monday 10th**

John

## **Tuesday 11th**

For the future of our church and fellowship

## **Wednesday 12th**

John Street

## **Thursday 13th**

For our Foreign Secretary

## **Friday 14th**

The work of The Leprosy Mission  
(we support them)

## **Saturday 15th**

Sunday's Worship Leader and  
the service tomorrow

## **Sunday 16th**

Give thanks for answered prayers

## **Monday 17th**

Joseph

## **Tuesday 18th**

That we as a fellowship will be  
open to the guiding of the Holy  
Spirit

## **Wednesday 19th**

Kingsbury Place

## **Thursday 20th**

For our Chancellor of the Ex-  
chequer

## **Friday 21st**

Elijah, our sponsored child in  
Zambia

## **Saturday 22nd**

Sunday's Worship Leader and  
the service tomorrow

## **Sunday 23rd**

Thanks for our service men &  
women

## **Monday 24th**

Judith

## **Tuesday 25th**

That people will earnestly pray  
about their role in the church  
and if they are being led to take  
a more active part in the life of  
the church and its mission

## **Wednesday 26th**

Ladbroke Road

## **Thursday 27th**

For the Leader of the House of  
Lords

## **Friday 28th**

Parents needing help and sup-  
port to care for their children

## **Saturday 29th**

Sunday's Worship Leader and  
the service tomorrow

## **Sunday 30th**

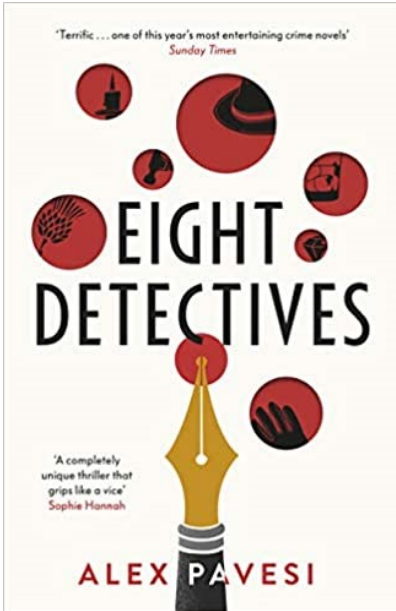
Thanks for carers and those  
helping people to live a normal  
life

## **Monday 31st**

Julia



## Book Club



### Eight Detectives by Alex Pavesi

This, his first novel, is described by some as a 'classic murder mystery'. The member who suggested reading it started our review chat by saying, "Sorry, I had no idea'. I did finish it."

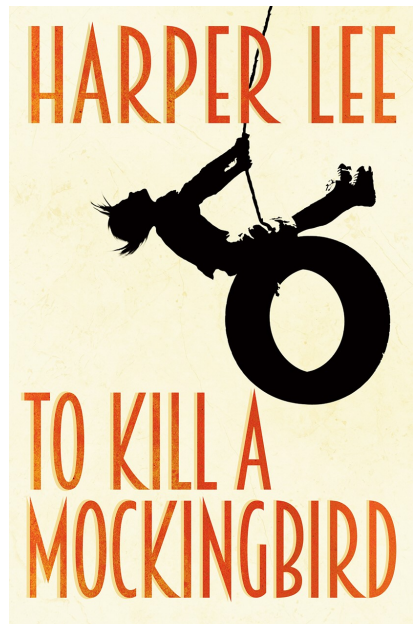
It is strange writing. Seven detective stories with the eighth being the whole book as viewed by a 'publisher' speaking to the author in preparation for a re-publication but ... nothing is as it seems, and it took a while to realise this.

We did not like the characters and one of the stories reminded us of Agatha Christie in part. Detection certainly is required but when the mathematical implications of victim, suspect and detective were intertwined in a Venn diagram, we lost it!

We suppose it is clever but ... we don't think we will look for Alex's next novel.

It is 2007 since this club read *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee so we thought we would give it another read. We next meet on the 6th December at 10:30 at the church.

Sylvia



# Free\* Family Film Feast

3.00pm 11th December



A small but brave donkey named Bo yearns for a life beyond his daily grind at the village mill.

**U 2017 1h 26 Minutes**



Bush Hill Park Christ Church Lancaster Road Palmers Green  
Ponders End Trinity Methodist/URC Winchmore Hill

**Bush Hill Park United Reformed Church**  
25 Main Avenue, Enfield EN1 1DJ  
[www.bhpurc.org.uk](http://www.bhpurc.org.uk)

## **When someone you loved is dead**

Following on from last month, the other lessons that I learned following my wife's death were:

That it helps to talk about your loss and the person you have lost. Sharing helps you to put things together in your mind, and is healing in itself.

Don't be afraid of pain, and don't anaesthetise it or avoid it – acknowledge it, face it, and you will heal more quickly.

That crying is normal, even for men, and it is a healing part of the grief process. Don't be afraid of this, even in public.

It may surprise you, to discover which people draw near to you in your grief, and who steps away. Appreciate those who come closer, without judging those who hold back.

Not everything people say to you about grief and your response will be helpful. Decide for yourself what is important for you, and let the rest go.

That grief may expose some of your inner fault-lines, but don't be afraid of this – learning more about yourself is a gift that comes with grieving.

No-one grieves perfectly. Following the death of your loved one, you will make mistakes, bad choices, and errors of judgment. This is normal, so forgive yourself.

That hope will rise again within you. The human spirit, in combination with God's grace, has its own remarkable resilience.

Don't be afraid to live again. God has a good purpose for you, and a plan for your life.

That your faith is an asset, not a liability. When you are tempted to be angry with God, remember that He is an ever-present help in time of need. Lean on Him.

That you have a part to play in your grief journey, so don't be passive and allow it to overwhelm you – begin to do what you can to rebuild your life.

Tony Horsfall

Tony lost his wife last year to cancer. He is a former missionary in East Malaysia and former retreat leader based in West Yorkshire.

## **How to beat the internet**

Churches across are now squaring up to the same challenges – and opportunities – that local shops and businesses have faced for years.

It's all about the internet, and how that changes everything.

In the pre-Covid world, services were held in churches, and people went to them. Or not. Throughout the lockdowns, most churches went online. Services were recorded or streamed from church buildings, kitchens, lounges or even, sheds.

Some looked amazingly slick and professional. Most simply reflected the gifts and technical skills that the church could muster.

The move online brought other changes. Local people dropped in online to high-profile churches in the UK or overseas. Worshippers from around the world started 'attending' services across Britain.

People who had not attended church for years, or not at all, came across services online and were surprised at the variety on offer. They joined online services at different times to when they had been available live – and some watched while drinking coffee in bed.

Those who through disability had not been able to attend services could now join online alongside those who used to go, physically, each week.

But now, as post-Covid normality largely returns, many churches are facing tough decisions about their online offerings.

Do we go back to services only being held in church? Or do we continue with online offerings as well? Where technically possible, the answer must be yes – to keep going both online and in church.

Yet if churches want to encourage more people to come through our doors – and we do – we need to look at what's on offer. That means working on the warmth of welcome and the quality of worship and practical teaching.

More importantly, it's about bringing people into the presence of a God who loves them, affirms them and wants the best for them. It's about being part of a community of people who are seeking to follow God, who fail, but go on trying.

It's about church as a place where people can feel welcomed, at home, safe, and valued. A place where they are known and loved.

And, when all that is in place, it beats anything the internet can offer.

Revd Peter Crumpler  
a Church of England priest in St Albans, Herts,  
and a former communications director for the C of E



"The vicar's still miffed that one of the parents got £250 from You've Been Framed for their video of last year's nativity play."

# **Amos Trust beautiful resistance Christmas carol tour 2021**



Join the Amos Trust on tour this winter when they will be hosting their friends Abdelfattah Abusrour and Sally Azzam Cook and other guest performers.

## **London event**

Thursday 2nd December, 19:00  
London, St James's Piccadilly  
197 Piccadilly, London W1J 9LL

Tickets for the London event are £7 per person  
Children and concessions are £5 per person

## **Online event**

Monday 6th December, 19:00  
A Night of Beautiful Resistance

With Abdelfattah Abusrour, Sally Azzam Cook. Also joining us will be a host of special guest singers, performers and artists including Martyn Joseph, Beth Rowley, Rasha Nahas, Justin Butcher, Shareef Sarhan and the Tadhamon Singers.

For tickets and more information on both events visit  
<https://www.amostrust.org/christmas-2021>

## Why the world was ready for Christmas

Ever wonder why Jesus was born when He was? The Bible tells us that “when the time had fully come, God sent forth His Son...” The Jewish people had been waiting for their Messiah for centuries. Why did God send Him precisely when He did?

Many biblical scholars believe that the ‘time had fully come’ for Jesus because of the politics of the time. The Roman Empire’s sheer size and dominance had achieved something unique in world history: the opportunity for travel from Bethlehem to Berwick on Tweed without ever crossing into ‘enemy territory’ or needing a ‘passport’. For the first time ever, it was possible for ‘common’ people to travel wide and far, and quickly spread news and ideas. And all you needed were two languages – Greek to the east of Rome, and Latin to the west and north. You could set sail from Joppa (Tel Aviv) and head for any port on the Med. And the Roman roads ran straight and true throughout the empire.

So the Roman Empire achieved something it never intended: it helped spread news of Christianity far and wide for 400 years. After that, the Empire crumbled, and the borders shut down. Not until the 19th century would people again roam so freely. The time for Jesus to be born, and for news of Him to be able to travel, had indeed ‘fully come’.



## **Three simple tips for staying argument free in your family this Christmas**

For many of us, the lure of a 'perfect' Christmas lurks in our subconscious. Advertisers play into this desire for serving the best food, the home looking super cosy and festive and everyone wonderfully 'suited and booted'.

The reality of Christmas is, of course, always different. It often involves anxiety, tensions and arguments in between the stockings and the crackers.

The pressures may be even greater after last year's Christmas in lockdown and the threat of shortages this year. So here are three simple tips to help you avoid some of the stress and have a happier time as a family this Christmas.

Firstly, share – and maybe reset – some of your expectations with family members. It's so easy to go on autopilot, and play the usual roles at Christmas, whatever they look like in your family. This often leaves one person – often Mum – carrying the burden of it all.

Instead, sit down for a few minutes with your other half and talk about your expectations. What would both of you like your celebration to be, and what don't you both want to happen? Having this kind of simple conversation gets a lot into the open and will enable you to plan together and share ideas too.

Secondly, be proactive. If you're the one who generally organises and does the shopping, wrapping, cooking etc, be proactive and ask for help and support. You may have to accept that others do things differently, and maybe not up to your standards, but a team effort gets everyone involved as well as spreading the load (even sulky teenagers will usually do their bit when asked.)

If you're the partner of the chief organiser, then be proactive in offering support. Tip: instead of saying: "Do you need any help?" (Where the answer is often "I'm ok...") Ask: "What can I do to help today?"



## TOUCAN TOGETHER

Thirdly, deal with the little things before they become big things. Our natural ways of handling conflict often work against us, and instead make conflict worse. Conflict avoiders will try to avoid awkward conversations and get prickly and defensive. The rhinos will charge in and shout. Whether you're more like a hedgehog or rhino in an argument, try instead to nip problems in the bud by recognising your own rising feelings and finding positive solutions together: "I'm feeling upset about ...what can we do differently?"

Christine Daniel

Christine is a speaker and blogger for FamilyLife UK, developer of the Toucan Together resource. Toucan Together is a relationship wellness app for couples that covers friendship, intimacy, resolving conflict, love language, and money management. Visit it at [www.toucantogether.com](http://www.toucantogether.com)



The

# LITTLE GREEN DRAGON

Ale House

# BEER & CAROLS

Monday 20th

December

7.30pm



*Enfield*  
**United  
Reformed  
Churches**

Raising money for local charities.

Bush Hill Park   Christ Church   Lancaster Road   Palmers Green  
Ponders End   Trinity Methodist/URC   Winchmore Hill

# Prayer

## Christmas Presence

(Isa 9:6, 7:14)

Unto us a child is born  
To us a son is given...

And you will call Him Immanuel,  
God with us.

Jesus, God actually with us.  
God's greatest gift,  
Born into weakness and vulnerability,  
Sharing life's raw reality,  
Family rows, family rejoicing,  
Broken relationships, broken hearts,  
Grief and great suffering,  
Rejection and injustice,  
Despair and death.

Yet through it all  
Still the gift goes on  
Revealing God's grace and power  
And peace to overcome.  
This is a gift that cannot be wrapped,  
That will never break  
Or pass its sell-by date.  
This is Jesus,  
The greatest gift.

Receive God's Christmas presence  
And walk on with Him.

By Daphne Kitching

If you would like prayer for yourself or family and friends please email  
[prayer@bhpurc.org.uk](mailto:prayer@bhpurc.org.uk)

## Wordsearch

Christmas is nearly here! Two thousand years ago the Jews were longing for the coming of their Messiah. The Old Testament had promised that when He came, He would preach good news to the poor, bind up the broken hearted, proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, comfort all who mourn and to bestow on His people a crown of beauty instead of ashes. Jesus did all those things. He was and is the Son of God, and whoever has seen Him has seen the Father. Whoever believes in Him will have the best gift of all – His Spirit within them, which gives them eternal life.

messiah	broken	heart	freedom	darkness
favour	prisoners	comfort	mourn	bestow
crown	beauty	ashes	son	god
jesus	seen	father	whoever	longing
thousand				



## Other local church activities

### Weekly

Day	Time	Activity	Location
Sun	6.30pm	Service (1st of the month is Café style, 4th of the month is Contemporary with the band)	Lancaster Road
Mon	10am	Ladies Bible Study	Living Room
	7.30pm	English Conversation Club	Living Room
	7.45pm	Prayer at Betty's (Fortnightly)	BHP Methodist
Tues	10am	Tots and Toys	Gospel Hall
	10.30am	United Prayer (1st and 3rd of the month)	Winchmore Hill Baptist
	1.30pm	Open House (Coffee and Chat)	Living Room
Wed	9.45am	Bible Study (Fortnightly)	Lancaster Road
	10am	Prayer (Fortnightly, alternates with above)	Lancaster Road
	2pm	Wednesday Fellowship (Talks from a variety of speakers, see Margaret Barbour for detail)	BHP Methodist
Thurs	1pm	Back to Life (Support Group / Board Games) starts with lunch	Living Room
Fri	10am	Shoppers Coffee Morning	Lancaster Road
	4pm	EPIC (Club for kids in years 3-6)	Gospel Hall
Sat	9am	Breakfast Club (1st and 3rd of the month)	Christ Church

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Next newsletter deadline:  
Sunday 9th January

All material for inclusion should be emailed to  
newsletter@bhpurc.org.uk

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# Weekly Activities

## Monday

- 6.15pm Boys' Brigade Junior Section
- 7.30pm Boys' Brigade Company Section
- 8.00pm Book Club (Once a month, see inside for date)

## Wednesday

- 10:00am Toddler Group
- 6.30pm Girls' Brigade

## Thursday

- 11.00am Friends Group (2nd & 4th Thursday)
- 7.30pm Boys' Brigade Company Section circuit training (when advised)

## Friday

- 6.00pm Boys' Brigade Anchor Boys

## Sunday

- 10.00am Worship with groups for children and young people (Communion 1st Sunday)

Some activities are happening this month, please check the church website to confirm if the activity you want to go to is going ahead.  
[www.bhpurc.org.uk/calendar](http://www.bhpurc.org.uk/calendar)

