

# Roundabout



**The Cotteridge Church  
Witnessing at the Heart of the Community**

**November 2021**

# Mike's message ...

## COP26

As this magazine goes to press in the last week of October attention is beginning to turn towards the COP26 summit in Glasgow.

The churches are deeply involved in COP26. The Church of Scotland (a Presbyterian church) is leading the churches' role with the ecumenical group Glasgow Churches Together co-ordinating activities that include worship, advocacy (keeping the pressure on governments to act), and even hosting Climate Guests - as many campaigners are heading there too.



COP26 stands for 'The 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties' and run from 31st October - 12th November. It's expected that at least 120 Heads of State will be there and its the biggest conference that's ever been held in Glasgow.

Why are the churches involved in COP26?

Combating Climate Change is an urgent issue. Changes in climate affect everyone, but the poorest nations and peoples are affected most. Deserts advance and destroy already struggling farming communities and livelihoods. Sea levels rise and flood whole cities and other communities? Two areas most affected by these are sub-Saharan Africa and the Ganges Delta in Bangladesh. The latter is densely populated and, as close to sea level, very vulnerable. Elsewhere in south Asia the Maldives are in danger of losing their existence all together.

Climate change, and rising sea levels, have other effects too. Millions of people are already having to move. Millions more will follow. There will be pressure on food and clean water supplies. In turn that destabilises whole areas of the world leading to violence and war.

In the Gospels, Jesus teaches us that we are to 'Love God and love our neighbour as ourselves'. Our neighbours are all the inhabitants of this planet. We need to take actions that can lessen the effects of Climate Change. Here at The Cotteridge Church we have an Eco-Group working to see how we, as a church community, can make changes to reduce emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>. That involves things such as improving our recycling and reviewing how we provide heat and lighting.

[We already have solar panels]

Please pray for COP26 and, after 12th November, for the implementation of measures to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Pray also for each other and yourselves in helping with the task. We have a global community, let us care for this planet - our only home.

## Friends and Family

It was good to see Lin and Laurie Brown again at our morning service on 26th September. They left during the pandemic lockdown so we had to postpone our farewell and thanks until just now.

We are sad to record the deaths

of David Walker, husband of Pat,

of Joy Kinton, wife of our excellent former organist Colin Kinton. She died on 20th September aged 80, and is now at rest in the churchyard at Horne, Suffolk just yards from where she was born.

of Chris Haigh who died on 16th September. Lin Brown's eulogy to her has been adapted here.

We send our prayers and best wishes to all their families and friends.

Linda Mann has announced that the Tuesday Fellowship will be meeting face to face again on the second and fourth Tuesdays each month, starting on 9th November.

Macmillan Coffee morning : Linda and Mandy thank all who supported this. The total raised is £310.

Gordon Parson has been busy during the last month or so, as you will see later on.

Thank you Gordon

And finally - some good news: We are planning to hold a

**Christmas Fair on Saturday 11th December from 10.00 am.**

## The Cotteridge Church Knit & Natter group

Join us for an enjoyable knit and natter every Thursday 10.30 - 12.00 noon in the Pennine Way café at the Cotteridge Church. Bring your own knitting, or crochet or over the coming weeks you might like to knit a

Christingle. We have ordered plenty of orange and white wool and small pom poms for the sweets. And if you're not sure what a Christingle is then all will be revealed in our All-Age Christingle service at 10.30 am on Sunday 5th December. Everyone welcome.

Many thanks to those who have donated needles and wool. These will inspire us to new projects.

Barbara Calvert



## Sing for the Lord!

Khadeem Duncan has restarted a church choir named the Cotteridge Singers, aiming for a sung Evensong on the evening of Sunday November 7th. All singers welcome. We practice each Thursday evening at church from 6 pm.

A yellow flyer for "Churches Together Choral Evensong". The text on the flyer reads: "Churches Together Choral Evensong", "A joint service for Birmingham Christian faith groups to celebrate the return of music and singing in our Churches!", "With works by Bach, Howells, Widor and many more!", "Featuring a mini organ recital by renowned local Organist, Darren Hogg GBSM ABSM", "Sung by The Cotteridge Singers", "Refreshments - 6:00pm", "Organ Recital - 6:10pm", "Choral Evensong Service - 6:30pm", "Sunday 7th November 2021", "The Cotteridge Church", "24 Pershore Road South", "Cotteridge", "Birmingham", "B30 3EJ", and "Delicious homemade tasty cakes on sale!". There is also a logo for "LIGHTS" with a cross and a flame.

## From our new Administrator

I would like to start by saying a big hello to each and every one of you.

I'm delighted to have been offered the role as Church Administrator, and over the past few weeks I've spent some time around the church getting to understand a little bit about what goes on...Wow! there's so much to be learnt.

I've already enjoyed meeting some great people, and I look forward to getting to know you all as we move forwards. I hope to be a presence around the church and I'm approachable, so please do come and see me if I can be of any assistance.

I live in Cotteridge with my partner and our two children, and I'm enthused by the local community spirit. I feel that the church sits right at the centre of this, and when I saw the administrator role advertised, I was immediately drawn to it. This is a big change for me, having spent the last 19 years working predominantly in sales for a technical company. However, I needed a change, and yearned for a more fulfilling role. I couldn't think of a greater place to work than here, doing such fantastic work for a thriving community.

I've had the warmest welcome, and I already feel at home here, so thank you. I'm excited to be on the journey with you all.

Sarah Molloy.

## Chris Haigh

Chris Haigh was an Essex girl and proud of it. Born on 28<sup>th</sup> May in 1945 as a child lived in Hornchurch with her siblings, Cynthia and Derek the youngest daughter of Con and Marion. After school she went to work for Lloyds Bank Head Office in London.

Moving with her partner Roger in 1975 to Ashby de la Zouch, transferred to Lloyds Bank Regional Head Office in Birmingham she was PA and secretary to the Regional Director and where she and I first met. Then from Ashby to Four Oaks where she and Roger married in September 1977. It was here, I met Stephen, Roger's son from his first marriage. They moved to East Sussex in April 1988 and she transferred to Lloyds Gatwick Regional Office where she worked until early retirement in 2002. Chris was an exceptional secretary, skills that she used when volunteering as the Church Day Centre Secretary. Sadly Roger was involved in a serious car accident in May 1988 and needed full time nursing care until his death in 2008.

She and Roger had travelled extensively... Kenya, Singapore, Thailand and many European destinations. Her first solo trip to India, she fell and broke her ankle and was operated on in Jaipur. She loved India and she made many more trips there. Also to Malaysia and Kenya to visit her adopted elephant Deka. America, east and west coasts and the deep south, a trip inspired after an evening listening to Nick Jones, minister at the time at The Cotteridge Church, singing Elvis songs. That was



the first of many trips with Eira after moving back to Birmingham and her new home in Wythall in 2014. Several holidays followed including New Zealand, New Hampshire, Vienna, cruises and the Italian Lakes.

Chris loved her animals. Cindy a red setter who died in the car in Roger's accident. Cats, Timmy and then Felix. She took up horse riding in her late 40's, Charly was her favourite horse and a friendship with another Charlie a Westie that led her to her beloved Jamie and later Brodie.

She was marvellous at remembering people's names another skill used when connecting with customers when volunteering on the Church Coffee Bar.

Speaking to Chris' friends and from the comments in the many cards and letters of condolence often mentioned was her sense of humour, enjoyed a party, bubbly, generous, thoughtful, positive and her total dedication to Roger. She never wavered in her love for and her care of him.

Chris was quite a private person and fiercely independent. We were all taken by surprise at the suddenness of her condition and demise. She leaves a huge gap in our lives and as a friend said to me it's hard to come to terms with the thought that we will never again share those happy crazy times.

Next time you raise a glass, think of her, who often said, "I can't drink no more pour it over me" and toast Absent Friends.

Lin Brown

### Stephanie Kelly

Mom came to the UK in 1956 to join my father whom she had met in Jamaica and who had arrived in Britain earlier. She began working as a Nursing Auxiliary at the old St Chad's Hospital, in West Bromwich. From the stories she told she mostly seem to have enjoyed her time as a Nurse.

In 1957, she married my dad. She had two children, Paulette and Robin, and totally doted on her only grandchild, Jai and her two great grandchildren, Lyla and Beau, who never stopped making her smile.

Although she enjoyed nursing, she made the decision in the early '60s to change career from nursing to hairdressing, which she did until she retired. During that time many of her customers became her firm friends

Mom had a welcoming smile, a great sense of humour and was an exuberant teaser who always had a story to tell. If asked if the event actually happened, she would, on the occasions she wasn't involved in it, say that the story was told to her by her mother which meant that it **must** be true. But one of the major joys in her life was dancing and if a saxophone was in the song, well, that was it, she was lost in the music.

Mom had great compassion and understanding and would strike up a conversation with anyone. She didn't like to see anyone unhappy and would try to bring cheer by telling them one of her amusing stories.

She loved to travel and in her later years had visited countries in Europe, America, and the Caribbean.

While living in Northfield, Mom was invited to a local Senior Citizens Club (which she called the Over the Hill Club) and thoroughly enjoyed the fun and friendships she found there - especially the excursions to different towns and attractions.

There is a lot more we could say about Mom but this gives the essence of her.

Sadly, Mom passed away at the end of July and will be sorely missed by family and friends.

Paulette Kelly

Advent Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2021  
Christian Aid Christmas Appeal at The Cotteridge Church  
Impossible Choices

In the weeks before Christmas shopping can become a major preoccupation. What to get everyone for Christmas? We have so much choice it can be difficult to decide...this pair of slippers or those? These socks or the other ones? Which will they like best? At the same time, we understand that for many people in the world even choices about basic necessities are very limited.

Adut lives in South Sudan. Tragically this fragile country has been beset with years of conflict, famine, drought, mass displacement and locusts.

Adut was in desperate need. 'To look after my children', she explained, 'they had to drink the dirty river water. The water has many diseases. There is cows' dung, there is donkeys' dung...People wash in there'.

The River Makadh runs through Adut's village of Biet in north-west South Sudan and was the community's only sources of water. No mum should have to choose between dirty water or none at all. But for a long time that impossible choice was a reality for Adut.

Not anymore.

Adut now has access to a borehole near her home, which means clean water for her children to drink ...and peace of mind for a loving mum.

Thanks to supporters like you, Adut's community were able to build the borehole with support from Christian Aid's partner, SPEDP. They drilled a narrow shaft into the ground to extract water from a naturally occurring source. Above ground, a hand pump is used to drive the water to the surface.

'Now we get water from the hand pump. We don't send our children to the river. The water from the pump is very good. It's disease free. We drink it with peace of mind.' Something so simple brings Adut so much joy.



Let us see how much we can raise at The Cotteridge Church at our special Advent Sunday service supporting Christian Aid's Christmas Appeal.

**£50** could provide 5 families with jerrycans to collect clean drinking water

**£200** could provide 40 families displaced by floods with a water hygiene kit, giving them clean drinking water

**£500** could help build a new borehole to provide clean water for 5,000 women, men and children

Ways to donate to Christian Aid's Christmas Appeal:

1. Envelopes in church Sunday 28th November - please return on following Sundays or to Sarah in the office.

2. Donate online: [www.christianaid.org.uk/christmas-appeal](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/christmas-appeal)

Barbara Calvert

## Boys' Brigade October 2021

It's been a long time, but BB finally restarted at Church at the beginning of September. Most of the boys returned but we would welcome any new members on a Friday night.



Our company enrolment service has taken place and we would like to thank our Chaplain Mike Claridge, and president Mike Meadows for attending. Liam and Dennis have now received their president's Award.

We hope to attend the Church Service in uniform on Sunday 7th November, which is also the start of BB week. Any donations would be welcome towards the cost of running the company. Despite not meeting since last year we still need to pay BB headquarters our capitation fee which will probably be about £650 this year.

Bob Hotchkiss.



## Services in November and December

	7th November	14th November	21st November	28th November Advent Sunday
10:30 am	Parade Service Revd M. Claridge	Revd M. Claridge HC	Morning Worship Revd R. Collins	Christmas Christian Aid Service Revd Barbara Calvert HC
	5th December	12th December	19th December	26th December
10:30 am	All age Christingle Service Revd Barbara Calvert	Revd R. Collins HC	Carol Service Revd M. Claridge	Revd R. Collins HC

Sunday 7th November 6.00 pm Refreshments; 6.10 pm Organ Recital;  
6.30 pm Choral Evensong Service

Wednesday 22nd December 7.00 pm

Cotteridge Church Carols - Outside, around the tree.

Christmas Eve Friday 24th December 11.30 pm Midnight Communion, Revd Mike Claridge

Christmas Day Saturday 25th December 10.30 am Christmas All Age Worship  
[including informal Communion] Revd Roger Collins

### WHAT ARE YOU ?

Science and Biblical Thought sometimes, but not frequently converge or coincide. An example of such coincidence is to be found in the Bible King James 1611 Authorised Version in Verse 14 of Psalm 139, which says 'I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made : marvellous are thy works ; and that my soul knoweth right well'.

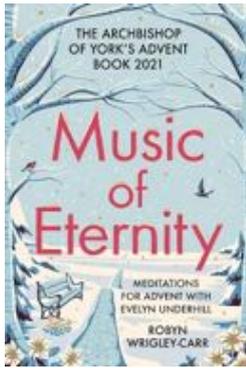
It is the Psalmist's same sense of Awe Wonder Enchantment (AWE) that underlies author Bill Bryson's magnificent 400 plus page volume - 'The Body. A Guide for Occupants' The list of Sources which constituted his research before penning the work is supremely extensive and fascinating. 'You blink fourteen thousand times a day' plus other statistics in the text fully agree with verse 14 of Psalm 139 because at any one time 7 or 8 billion folk exist on Planet Earth, every one different and unique in mind body and spirit.

Bryson's book contains 23 chapters all of fundamental interest, dealing with every conceivable aspect of human anatomy. Chapter titles intriguingly include How To Build a Human, Microbial You, The Brain, The Head, The Chemistry Department, In the Dissecting Room; the Skeleton, the Immune System, Food Glorious Food, Sleep, Into the Nether Regions, In the Beginning: Conception and Birth, Nerves and Pain, and concludes with the Chapter called The End!

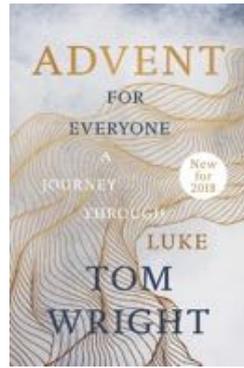
A Further quote for these times - 'Sneeze droplets can travel up to 8 metres'. And one in addition - 'A Powerful Painkiller, OPIORPHIN Is found in human spit'.

As we proceed into Advent in the Church Calendar it is right and proper that we should reserve conscious humility and awe for this year's retelling of The Nativity.  
Gordon Parsons.

## NEW BOOKS FOR ADVENT AVAILABLE FROM THE COTTERIDGE CHURCH BOOK CENTRE



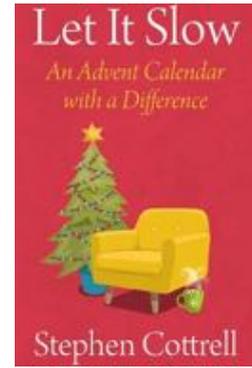
£10.99



£8.99



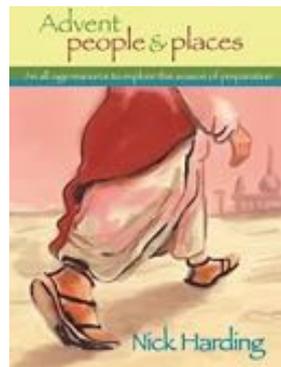
£9.99



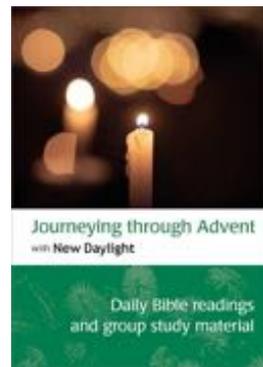
£6.99



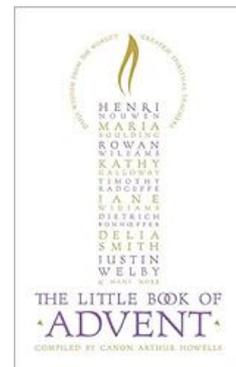
£5.99



£9.99



£2.99



£4.99

### "WRITE OUT THE PAIN"

Renata Azman, before she took her own life, was a visiting author from Slovenia whose uniquely meaningful contribution to University of Birmingham Centre of Excellence in Inter-disciplinary Mental Health is the exhortation "Write Out the Pain". She herself held particular pain in her very fertile mind as an abused child.

Those four words, once digested, have helped many to expel, by use of words describing emotions, the mental turmoil following bereavement or any one of Life's inevitable reverses.

The four words are a legacy of incalculable value whether adopted daily or intermittently. A journal or a diary can be instrumental in plotting the course of a hurt as well as the restoration of wholesome and holistic spiritual health.

A friend to whom I read out loud this article thus far commented sagely 'writing for others to read in a publication is a conceit'.

I agree and disagree with both at the same time.

It is probably a sin to take pleasure in seeing one's own name on a printed page as a contributor, but whether venal, cardinal or one of the ten deadly sins becomes immaterial if readers are helped by it beneficially to them.

It is truly wonderful to be accorded a platform, a place where one has a voice.

You may not welcome the prediction (not mine) that one day science will oblige us all to lose the power of written and spoken speech in favour of mega powerful subcutaneous tiny silicon chip computer implants that not only do our thinking but also transmit self edited thoughts to one another.

Is this picture of effortless communication believable or unimaginable?

Certainly it may be impossible to police.

It may also be worse than a sin!

Gordon Parsons.

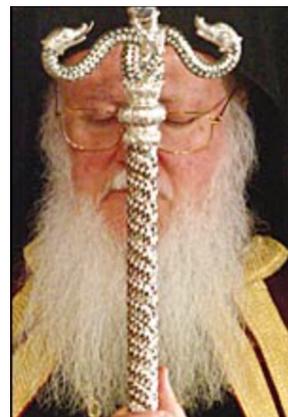
## Green Christian Leaders

Religious leaders worldwide are supporting the drive to protect our planet. The stories given below are selected and edited from a website shown at the end of the piece

### 1. Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I



“Crime against the natural world is a sin,” says Bartholomew I, leader of more than 300 million Orthodox Christians worldwide. “The Green Patriarch” has thrown his weight behind various international environmental causes, and urges leaders of other faiths to raise



environmental awareness among their believers. The winner of both the U.S. Congressional Gold Medal and the Sophie Prize for leadership in environmental protection and sustainable development, Bartholomew I takes his “fisher of men” duty seriously: In 2003, he brought together 200 scientists, political leaders, and journalists on a cruise ship in the Baltic Sea to discuss marine preservation and the hazards of overfishing. “To protect the oceans is to do God’s work,” he says. “To harm them, even if we are ignorant of the harm we cause, is to diminish His divine creation.”

### 2. Rev. Sally Bingham

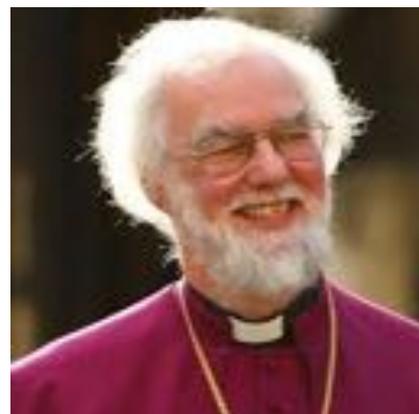
Sally Bingham - an Episcopal priest and the environmental minister at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, California brings light to congregations in more ways than one. Via the Interfaith Power & Light campaign, she’s been a leader in encouraging religious groups to purchase green power and conserve energy by, among other things, replacing old-style light bulbs with compact fluorescents. The Regeneration Project, which she heads, recently united leaders



from Christian, Muslim, and Jewish faith groups to ask the U.S. Congress and the White House to act on global warming. Bingham previously served on the board of Environmental Defense and San Francisco’s Commission on the Environment, and has earned many accolades for her work, including the Green Power Leadership Pilot Award and the 2002 Energy Globe Award.

### 3. Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams

Use organic bread and wine for Holy Communion. Sell fairly traded products at church events. Carpool. Recycle. All of these were among the recommendations of Rowan Williams, senior clergyman of the Church of England, in “Sharing God’s Planet,” his 2005 report to the General Synod meeting. Williams says Christians have a moral duty to practice “sustainable consumption” and “celebrate



and care for every part of God’s creation.” He launched a church-wide national environmental campaign, and, most recently, endorsed a booklet encouraging Christians to play their part in protecting the environment: “How Many Lightbulbs Does it Take to Change a Christian?”

#### 4. Pope Benedict XVI

In addition to using an electric Popemobile on the grounds of solar-power-friendly Vatican City, Pope Benedict XVI has been increasingly vocal about the suffering that climate change will cause for the world’s poor. “The world is not something indifferent, raw material to be utilised simply as we see fit,” he has said. “Rather, it is part of God’s good plan.” He has said that humans must listen to “the voice of the earth,” supported the celebration of a “day for the safeguarding of Creation,” spoken out on the need to protect the Amazon, and denounced factory farming. In his recent “Sacramentum Caritatis”, he endorsed the need for environmental stewardship guided by Catholic faith: “The justified concern about threats to the environment present in so many parts of the world is reinforced by Christian hope, which commits us to working responsibly for the protection of Creation.”



#### 5. Sister Miriam MacGillis



So a Roman Catholic nun founds a farm in New Jersey. No, it’s not a joke - it’s Miriam MacGillis, a Dominican Sister on a mission to save the planet. MacGillis is co-founder of the 226-acre Genesis Farm, a “learning center for earth studies” where “all people of goodwill” are welcomed to learn about and share a love for the earth by working the land. For nearly three decades, this “green nun” has taught impoverished youth from urban areas about organic agriculture, earth literacy, and heritage seed preservation. The farm partnered with other local groups to start the Foodshed Alliance, a grassroots effort to sustain farmers, agricultural lands, and the rural way of life in their region. In 2005, MacGillis received

the Thomas Berry Foundation Award for her work.

Religious leaders worldwide are supporting the drive to protect our planet.



Celia Lester, using data from <https://grist.org/article/religious>



The Cotteridge Church  
**Joint Church Council**  
**Summary of Proceedings 12th October 2021**

### **Introduction**

The Meeting was held via Zoom.

### **Key Decisions**

1. The meeting agreed to consider the request for a donation to the Methodist Ministers Pension Fund.
2. The JCC agreed to re-introduce the Church's invoice approval process.
3. The JCC agreed to switch to 'Soldo' for the Church's Debit Card to improve control over expenditure.
4. It was agreed that a Community Carol Service would be held on the front steps of the Church on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2021.
5. It was also agreed that a Children's Party would be held on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2021.
6. The JCC approved the installation of a Christmas Tree outside the Church.
7. It was decided to pass the improvements required to the Malvern Room to the Property and Management Committee.

### **Summary Proceedings**

1. The meeting welcomed the Church's new Administrator, Miss Sarah Molloy, to the JCC.
2. It was noted that the Coffee Bar staff have been asked to complete Safeguarding training.
3. The Financial Report showed that the Church is operating at a loss.
4. Member donations have decreased since the start of the pandemic.
5. The meeting discussed the shortfall in Methodist Ministers Pension Fund.
6. The meeting discussed setting a Church Budget for 2022.
7. Church membership currently stands at 141.
8. It was noted that the Property and Management Committee was arranging for the Church signage to be repaired before Christmas.
9. Christmas events were discussed and agreed.
10. A standard Advent Liturgy was being developed for all local Churches.
11. The Cotteridge Church was now part of the Kings Norton, Moseley & Shirley Area Deanery under Phelim O'Hare.
12. The Cotteridge Church is also now part of the Methodist Church 'Blue Band' of Cotteridge, Selly Oak, Hazelwell, Northfield and University.
13. A Christmas Fayre will be held on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

The next meeting of the Joint Church Council will be on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2021 at 19:30.

This Summary is authorised by:

Neil Walters

Chair of the Cotteridge Church Joint Church Council

# Climate Change Emergency

**..What we do matters!**

**It really does matter...**I hope that you are finding ways of helping our planet in your daily lives. What we do as individuals does make a difference.....however small.

There has been so much about climate action recently. If you didn't watch the **EARTHSHOT** awards on BBC 1 last Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October I recommend it to you. It was an opportunity to see how throughout the world individuals and companies are looking for ways to reduce carbon emissions and make that difference to all our lives' It's always inspiring to hear David Attenborough speak too. He is totally amazing and speaks such sense!

There is a great article on the **British GAS website** about what we can do to reduce our electricity and gas bills all feeding into to reducing our carbon footprint of course...so here goes with some suggestions. I know some of you already do a lot of these but we can all share ideas together.

1. Do full laundry loads.
2. Use eco-settings on your washing machine. Turn down the temperature to 30°C (...use eco friendly powder or pods)
3. Dry your laundry outside.
4. Choose energy efficient kitchenware. Be careful with the kettle and amounts of water boiling.
5. Fill up your fridge and freezer.
6. Switch to LED bulbs.
7. Make your showers shorter.
8. Don't use the standby mode...and unplug chargers.
9. Use your microwave when possible to save heating the oven.
10. Update your boiler:- more about that in the future I think.

I know I am writing about what we can do as individuals and that feeds into the bigger picture as we work together to reduce our carbon emissions. It means that every little we can do is important.

Some very poignant words for us all now ...which Celia found on an Australian poster.

**“... we have not inherited this earth from our parents  
...we are borrowing it from our children...”**

Our Earth is so fragile.. we need to do all we can to care for our Planet.

**KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK EVERYONE**

**What you are doing does make a difference!**

Sandra Walton

# United Nations Climate Change Conference

COP26... GLASGOW...OCTOBER 31<sup>ST</sup>-NOVEMBER 13<sup>TH</sup>

Back in August I went to the Cathedral in Birmingham to welcome the group pulling a boat to Glasgow publicising this event. I was interested to see them and their commitment to climate action. We took part in a small service



to bless those walking and to pray for the upcoming conference in Glasgow. We listened to these words from one of the cathedral staff.....

“HOPE is a piece of work ....not a state of mind”

There has been so much on Television and Radio about this event that I know we all are eagerly awaiting it happening and more importantly the Outcomes and Actions taken to control the Climate Emergency.

CoP stands the Conference of Parties when they commit to actions. They carry this out every 5yrs as outlined in the PARIS Agreement So this year it's being held in Glasgow and we hold the presidency but are partnered with Italy. There are 196 countries attending and they need to ratify actions together

COP26 is so important because agreement from the countries (parties)is needed to set the goal of limiting global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius and preferably 1.5°C to avoid catastrophic climate change. We have all seen the effects of this on our news bulletins.

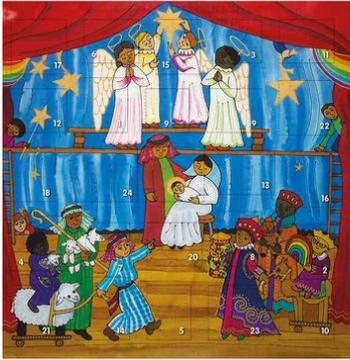
Please pray for the outcomes of this Conference and for those members taking part as it affects us ALL.

Thank you.

Sandra Walton

# Traidcraft Ideas for Christmas

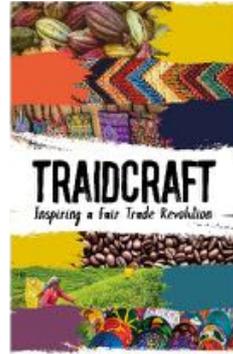
Advent Calendar  
£2.99



Chocolate Orange  
£3.50



History  
£12.99



Silver/ gold earrings  
£12.96



Scarf  
£24.95



Vase  
£24.99



Robin and Holly Giftwrap  
£4.95



Tea light nativity  
£2



Vase  
£19.99



Milk or dark chocolate  
£2.20



Elephant bag  
£20



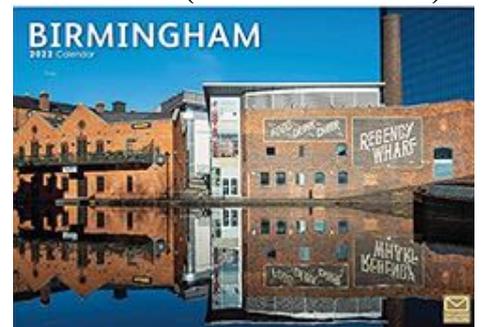
Star with LED lights  
£17.99



Zaytoun Collection  
Hamper £30



and of course we have the  
Birmingham Calendar  
£6.99 (not Traidcraft)



## Sunflowers

Following last year's successful competition, many people from all walks of life were given seeds and invited to grow the biggest sunflower possible. Jesus said 'I am the Light of the World and those who follow me will never walk in darkness but have the light of life'.



As sunflowers always grow towards the light and with the pandemic in full swing, you can see why sunflowers were symbolically chosen for the competition.



The results were enlightening, rather like the parable of the sower. Some people forgot to sow the seed, some seeds were scattered on poor soil producing feeble little flowers, some people went to immense trouble starting the seeds off in a greenhouse and went on to grow very large flowers.

Despite all the effort, slugs, snails, earwigs, squirrels and wind decimated some plants. Those people who grew good specimens (10ft tall) received a small prize. Everyone enjoyed the competition and there have already been requests for seed for next year.

Bob Burton

## Our Church Garden

Thanks to everyone who have been helping keep our garden tidy, & full of colour. We have big plans for opening-up the back garden to Pennine Way people as well as Church members, who are again coming back for coffee, snacks & meals. Help is needed----garden tools(trowels, secateurs, forks etc ) along with offers to help planting, clearing weeds & leaves & general garden duties.

If you have any time during to week, go into the greenhouse & there will be lists of "things to do". You will always be welcome to just go & take your coffee & find a sunny corner!!

Chris Pascal.

Maintenance and gardening tasks are often carried out weekly on a Friday. Current tasks include general litter collecting, weeding, planting, bench maintenance, removal of tree hedge, and putting up fencing. If you have time to spare, then please do come along and help upkeep the garden. It's very rewarding.

Dorothy Audley.

Donation of autumn bulbs, wallflowers etc. will be gratefully received for the Church Garden.

Bob Burton

## A PERFECT DAY OUT

With covid restrictions making foreign travel uncertain Naomi & I decided to tick off some neglected UK destinations. Scotland began to lift travel restrictions in July so we booked accommodation for three nights on both Orkney & Shetland then drove north to board a Northlink ferry at Aberdeen. Bicycles went free on the ferry



and we used them for day rides around Orkney before catching a second ferry further north to Shetland. Our trip was close to the summer equinox meaning we had extra hours of daylight and very few hours of darkness. Shetland is on latitude 60 degrees north. The Arctic circle is not much further north at 66 degrees. A retired shepherd called Robert had told us back on Orkney that if he looked south from Shetland mountains on a clear summer night, all he could see was the inky black of night.

But if he looked north he could see the glow over the horizon of sunshine above the Arctic circle. In winter he often saw the Northern Lights.

We managed one cycle ride on Shetland between the capital Lerwick and the former capital of Scalloway before deciding it was too mountainous and switched to the local buses. One route is designed to link island ferry times. We caught the early bus going north and had a two hour drive visiting remote hamlets to give school children a lift to their remote school or workers a lift to the biggest oil

terminus in Europe before the bus turned south at Toft. This was our first ferry point. A boat took us off Shetland further north to the island of Yell, a low lying moorland given over to sheep. As the ferry came in a second bus was waiting, driven by Clare. Her cash box was an ice cream carton left on the front seat. As Clare drove us to the next ferry point she gave us a running commentary of life on Yell, mostly how to look after sheep. A second ferry took us even further north to our second island of Unst where our third bus took us to the most northerly point in the UK. We got off and started walking through fields of cotton grass. The sea all around was a deep deep blue reflecting a cloudless sky where the sun hardly moved



for the next four hours. We sat on the sea shore and ate our packed lunch while watching grey seals through binoculars, then walked a few miles along deserted roads to the next bay. On the way we passed the most northerly Methodist church at Haroldswick. In the bay a geological board informed us that Unst had been formed when continental crust collided

with oceanic crust. Usually the lighter continental crust floats on top of denser oceanic crust but on this occasion they met horizontally. Both crusts showed as a line of rocks poking out of gleaming sand a few metres either side of a rift on the beach going hundreds of kilometres down.



We eventually walked back to the most northerly bus stop leaving enough time to explore a Viking round house and a replica Viking longship with its beautiful curved lines and fierce dragon prow. Our bus returned to Lerwick around 7 pm. We still had another four hours of daylight left after a perfect day out.

Peter Childs

## B30 FOOTBANK

I was recently at a service of traditional anglican evening prayer, and a verse of the Magnificat really stood out to me, possibly because I was saying it rather than singing it. The Virgin Mary proclaimed her song of praise when she was given the news she had been chosen to be the mother of the Son of God. In her song, she appears to be seeing the sort of world that her son would aspire to develop and nurture.

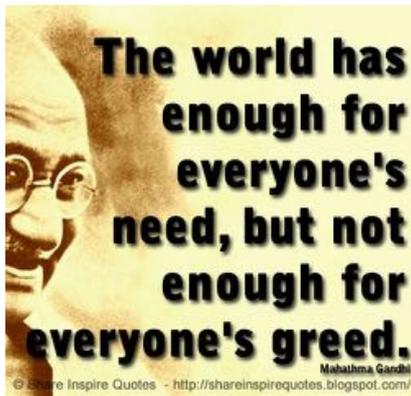
Which verse was it? The beginning of verse 8. "He (as in God) hath filled the hungry with good things".

And it made me think of our hope and wish that that could be true for all our foodbank clients. The biblical verse does, of course, refer to "good things" that will quell spiritual hunger as well as to wholesome foods which might "fill the belly".

Our food parcels contain the basics: they are "first aid" parcels in many ways: but they do fill the hungry with good things – or, at least, with adequate things. It also made me ponder about our donations. Most of our donations are really good and thoughtful: but the best way to make any of the warehouse volunteers angry is the small percentage of people who think that our clients our only worthy of their castoffs: the part opened product, or the product that is spectacularly out of date. For most of our donors, they really have produced something to "fill the hungry with good things". One of our early supermarket collections sticks in the mind of several of us. They came to our collection point with a full trolley – and put all but one bag into our collection bin. They only had one bag for themselves. The one person from our group who could put sound into words at the point did double check that they had got their gift the right way round. "Yes", was the quiet reply. The second half of verse 8 goes on to say "and the rich he [God] hath sent empty away". In this case, the donor themselves had sent themselves away empty – because they had given it all away. And perhaps this could be a secondary meaning to this half verse. God isn't going to give goodies to those who already have enough, but he may well be asking them to share it out: which is so often the comments we get from donors. "We are fortunate enough to have enough, so we wanted to do something useful"

But we also feed our clients with something else: our front of house and phone volunteers treat each client and referrer with respect and dignity, actually listening to what they are saying and asking for. Self respect is just as important as the actual food.

If we can aspire to that short biblical verse, whether we are of faith or not, we are heading in a pretty good direction.





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