



Welcoming,  
Caring,  
Sharing

**December 2014/January 2015**

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# The Sunday Plan



Sunday 7th December  
10:30 am Worship

Conducted by Helen Yare  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 14th December  
10:30 am Worship & Holy Communion  
Individual glasses

Conducted by Rev Diane Cooksey  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 21st December  
10:30 am Worship

Conducted by Singing Group  
Carol Service  
Refreshments after the service

Sunday 28th December  
10:30 am Worship & Holy Communion  
Common Cup

Conducted by Liz Davies  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 4th January  
10:30 am Worship

Conducted by Helen Moore  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 11th January  
10:30 am Worship & Holy Communion  
Individual glasses

Conducted by Rev Diane Cooksey  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 18th January  
10:30 am Worship

Conducted by Helen Yare  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 25th January  
10:30 am Worship & Holy Communion  
Common Cup

Conducted by Mr David Baker  
Pulpit Exchange with Soc. of Friends  
Coffee after the service

Sunday 1st February  
10:30 am Worship

Conducted by Rev. John Marsh  
Coffee after the service

## From the Manse



‘Joseph went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for him in the inn.’ (Luke 2.4-7)

That’s about all that Luke says about the actual birth of Jesus. He then goes on to talk about shepherds and angels, and Matthew talks about wise men. It’s all very brief. And yet, if you’ll excuse the pun, every phrase is pregnant with meaning. For two thousands years that event has captivated the world.

And no wonder. That event is rooted in human history. There God shared our human existence, because he loved the world. At the birth of Jesus, the final act of God’s salvation plan was set in motion. It began there.

So many people try to poo-poo the idea. For instance, Christians for centuries pointed to Nazareth as the home of Jesus. But it could not be found. There was no record anywhere of a town called ‘Nazareth.’ So the non-believers called Christians crazy. But, in 1962, an inscription was found at Caesarea Maritime that named Nazareth as the town in which the 18th priestly course resided. Nazareth really did exist. God’s word was right. The non-believers had no leg to stand on.

That is one of the reasons why Luke is so careful to give the birth of Jesus a firm historical framework. He mentions the census decree of Caesar Augustus. Joseph had to travel to Bethlehem because of the census. Why mention it? To point to the truth. Caesar Augustus reorganised the administration of the empire and conducted numerous local censuses. It was what happened. It was normal at the time. It was what Luke knew was true.

Those who want us to doubt the story of Jesus' birth also say that the Romans didn't normally require citizens to return to their ancestral homes during a census. So they say this is fiction. But there is some evidence, found in Egypt, that property owners in that area had to return to the district where they held land. Perhaps Joseph owned land in Bethlehem. And we know that, as often as they could, the Romans were very happy to allow local people to conduct their lives according to their own local laws - just as long as they caused no trouble and paid the tribute.

I could go on. Don't let the nay-sayers and the bah-humbugs divert you from God's truth. The birth of Jesus is the start of everything we hold dear. It is the 'fleshing out' of the love of God for each and every one of us. And it came to real fruition in the death and resurrection of Jesus that draws us to him. Underneath the sugary commercialism of Christmas, there is a solid historical event that cannot be disproved. It is down-to-earth and real. And it speaks to every one of us. Enjoy Rudolph and Santa, but rest in the truth of the love of God seen in that little baby.

Have a great Christmas

Duncan

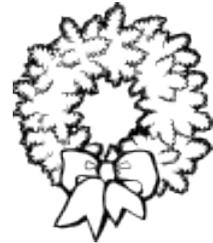


# Diary Dates



Monday Evenings : Singing Group : Contact Margaret Morris  
Friday Evenings : Table Tennis : Contact Tim Dunn  
Monthly Book Group : Contact Tim & Teresa Dunn  
Monthly Albany Fellowship : Contact Jean McCluskie/Teresa Dunn

# Christmas Services



Sunday 30th November  
6:30 pm

Advent Sunday Evening Service  
St John's Parish Church, Claines.  
Rev Helen Caine (new Methodist Circuit Superintendent)  
Salvation Army band included

Sunday 21st December  
10:30 am

Carol Service  
Conducted by the Singing Group

Wednesday 24th December  
11:30 pm

Christmas Eve Communion Service  
Rev Duncan Tuck

Thursday 25th December  
10:30 am

Christmas Day Family Service  
Rev Duncan Tuck

# Childrens Pages

## Cup And Ball Santa Craft

You will need:

Polystyrene ball  
Paper cup  
Pink paint  
Red paint  
Red and white felt  
Small red pompom  
White pompom  
Wiggle eyes  
Red, black and pink craft foam  
Pink pen  
Glue



Instructions:

Paint the ball pink and the cup red and leave to dry. Glue the ball to the bottom of the cup.

Cut two arms from red foam and two hands from pink. Glue one hand to the end of each arm and the other ends of the arms to the body.

Cut a strip of black foam and glue it around the middle of the cup as a belt.

Make a hat by rolling some red felt into a cone. Glue the edge of the cone and glue the hat to the top of the ball. Cut a band of white felt and glue it around the edge of the hat. Add a pom-pom at the end of the hat.

Cut a beard from white felt and glue to the front of the face. Add a red pom-pom nose. Finally, add two eyes and draw on a mouth.

## Christmas sock stocking craft

A quick and easy Christmas craft for younger children, have fun decorating a Christmas sock stocking for your favourite toy or teddy or to hang on the Christmas tree! I wonder if Santa will fill them with treats this year ....



You will need:

A clean sock

Fabric glue

Pom poms, sequins, or any decorative bits and pieces.

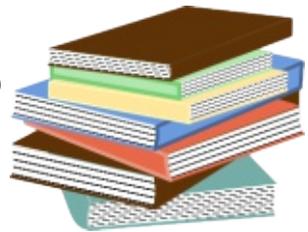
Instructions:

Glue your decorations to your sock. Leave to dry.

Peg onto your Christmas tree or the mantelpiece. Fill with sweets and little treats (or wait until Santa does that for you!) or use as a stocking for your favourite teddy bear or doll.

## Book Club

We had another very enjoyable book club meeting in October.



One of our number was reading "Life after Life" by Kate Atkinson, which we had discussed at the previous meeting, so much further discussion ensued.

We all talked about the books we had read over the Summer Holidays. At our next meeting we will talk about our Favourite Childrens book (past or current). Look out for our advertised meeting date and come and give it a try.

# Albany Fellowship

Well another year is almost over!!



At our last meeting we were entertained by Jeremy Davies who talked to us about his time in the RAF. He was very interesting to listen to and obviously took a lot away with him from this experience, which he clearly enjoyed.

Our last meeting of this year will be on 4th December, when we will join together at The Blue Bell at Callow End. We will all join to enjoy, what has become, our Annual Christmas meal outing.

It has been a very busy and varied year for both Jean, Teresa and Albany fellowship. At Fellowship and Church we have lost two of our members, Eileen Barnett and Margaret Morgan. We have welcomed more members in Tim, Jeremy and Liz on a regular monthly basis.

We have had talks about the Red Cross, The Theatre and Puppetry, The Great Wall of China, Childhood memories and time in the RAF to name a few. We also have had lunches of Soup and a Roll and catching up chats after our breaks.

We have managed some fundraising holding a Soup and a Roll Lunch and a Bring and Buy.

All that is left for us to say is that we Thank You all very much for your continued support each month, and to send all of you our heartfelt greetings for a Christmas filled Peace, Joy and many Blessings and Our best wishes for the New Year.

All our Love  
Jean and Teresa

**URC HOLIDAY FORUM**  
**Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> – Fri 28<sup>th</sup> August 2015**  
**Fun, faith and fellowship**

*The Christian Church in a  
world of many faiths*

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**Theme leader      Revd. Peter Colwell**

Deputy General Secretary of Churches Together in England and Wales

**Worship and music led by Revd. Ray Stanyon  
and Mrs Vicky Piggott-Genge**

**Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire**

Book via [bookings@urcholidayforum.org.uk](mailto:bookings@urcholidayforum.org.uk) or direct to Colin Ferguson, 20 Matlock Road, Caversham, RG4 7BS. Main cost is £440 (all meals etc) but we do have a bursary fund to help and children are on a sliding scale. There is an early booking discount of 5% for bookings and full payment received before the end of January 2015. Any questions contact Colin [colindf@btinternet.com](mailto:colindf@btinternet.com) or see our website [www.urcholidayforum.org.uk](http://www.urcholidayforum.org.uk)

**If you can't come yourself, could your church  
sponsor someone who needs a holiday?**

# Prayer Partners 2014

December

HIV STOP AIDS CAMPAIGN Related  
especially to  
1st December, World Aids Day



We pray for

- the Stop AIDS Campaign's work in raising awareness of the global HIV/AIDS epidemic and campaigning for comprehensive universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support.

- a world in which peoples' human rights are respected, discrimination that prevents certain groups of people from accessing services is stopped and the rights of people living with HIV and AIDS are fully respected.

-those who still live in fear of discovery or live with stigma from their community because of lack of education of the virus.

URC address TEL 020 7691 9867 Email: lmeadcforl@gmail.com

CforL Logo CA Logo WDM logo THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

## Items for the February Newsletter

If you have any items for inclusion in the February Newsletter please give them to Tim Dunn. 27a Cornmeadow Green, Claines, Worcester. WR3 7PN. Tel 01905 457909, Email newsletter@worcesterurc.org.uk by Sunday 25th January at the latest please.

## Worcester URC Duty Rotas

|                         | 7-Dec                                  | 14-Dec   | 21-Dec                         | 28-Dec                                |  |
|-------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Preacher                | Helen Yare                             | Diane Cooksey  | Singing Group<br>Carol Service | Liz Davies                            |  |
| Books/Foyer & Offertory | Bryan Neville-Lee<br>Nicky Neville-Lee | Jeremy Davies<br>Liz Davies                                  | Sarah Lodge<br>Margaret Dodds  | Roger Morris<br>Margaret Morris       |  |
| Reading                 | Roger Morris                           | Tim Dunn   | Helen Moore                    | David James                           |  |
| Prepare Table           |  | Teresa Dunn<br>Jean McCluskie                                |                                | Doreen Cheesbrough<br>Tom Cheesbrough |  |
| Serve Communion         |  | Paul Denham<br>Brian McCluskie<br>Sarah Lodge<br>Helen Moore |                                | Rob Peachey<br>David James            |  |
| Beadle                  | David James                            | Nicky Neville-Lee  | Helen Moore                    | Chris Harris                          |  |

|                         | 4-Jan                  | 11-Jan   | 18-Jan                  | 25-Jan                         |  |
|-------------------------|------------------------|--|-------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Preacher                | Helen Moore            | Rev Diane Cookley  | Helen Yare              | David Baker<br>Pulpit Exchange |  |
| Books/Foyer & Offertory | Penny Peak<br>Ann Cook | Doreen Cheesbrough<br>Tom Cheesbrough                                | Tim Dunn<br>Teresa Dunn | Paul Denham<br>Rob Peachey     |  |
| Reading                 | Bryan Neville-Lee      | Betty Forrer   | Penny Peak              | Michael Clarke                 |  |
| Prepare Table           |                        | Nicky Neville-Lee<br>Bryan Neville-Lee                               |                         | Len Berryman<br>Pat Berryman   |  |
| Serve Communion         |                        | Roger Morris<br>Margaret Morris<br>Tom Cheesbrough<br>Michael Clarke |                         | Jeremy Davies<br>Liz Davies    |  |
| Beadle                  | Brian McCluskie        | Paul Denham  | Liz Davies              | Helen Yare                     |  |

|                         | 1-Feb                        | 8-Feb  | 15-Feb                       | 22-Feb                            |  |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Preacher                | Rev John Marsh               |  |                              |                                   |  |
| Books/Foyer & Offertory | Pat Berryman<br>Len Berryman | Michael Clarke<br>Rosemary Clarke                                | David James<br>Barbara James | Brian McCluskie<br>Jean McCluskie |  |
| Reading                 | Nicky Neville-Lee            | Paul Denham  | Rob Peachey                  | Margaret Morris                   |  |
| Prepare Table           |                              | Sarah Lodge<br>Chris Harris                                      |                              | Teresa Dunn<br>Jean McCluskie     |  |
| Serve Communion         |                              | Paul Denham<br>Sarah Lodge<br>Brian McCluskie<br>Margaret Morris |                              | Roger Morris<br>Helen Moore       |  |
| Beadle                  | David James                  | Chris Harris   | Helen Moore                  | Nicky Neville-Lee                 |  |

**PLEASE ARRANGE YOUR OWN DUTY SWAPS AS REQUIRED**

