



## Focus on December 2024



Winter Scene  
*Caspar David Friedrich, 1811*  
*National Gallery London.*

## WELCOME TO WESLEY CHAPEL

Our Sunday Morning Worship is at 10.30am, see p3 for details of our services.

Circuit Morning Prayer Live runs every morning Monday to Friday at 8am on Facebook. This is available for watching again after the live broadcast/ <https://www.facebook.com/NiddValley/>

All links (and much more) can be accessed via our website  
<https://www.wesleychapelharrogate.org.uk>

or if you need more information leave a message:  
<https://www.wesleychapelharrogate.org.uk/contact>

### Wesley Chapel Contacts

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***The deadline for Wesley 'Focus on January is 29 December'***

*Please send any notices, news, articles, photographs to Judith Yeats: 07733 064697 [judithyeats0@gmail.com](mailto:judithyeats0@gmail.com). Focus is also on the website. <https://www.wesleychapelharrogate.org.uk/our-focus>*

## WHAT'S ON AT WESLEY

**SUNDAY 1 DECEMBER 10.30am.** Advent Sunday. Morning Worship with Holy Communion led by Rev. Gordon Hay.

**MONDAY 2 DECEMBER 1pm** Lunchtime Recital. See page for details.

**SUNDAY 8 DECEMBER 10.30am**

**10.30am.** Morning Worship led by Rev. Shaun Swithenbank

**6pm** Wesley Sunday Share via Zoom (Link will be sent out or contact Les or Judith).

**THURSDAY 12 DECEMBER 2pm.** Wesley Fellowship. Rev. Brian Hoare will give a talk entitled 'Advent Customs around the World'.

**SUNDAY 15 DECEMBER 10.30am** Morning Worship led by Deacon Gary Hoare

**FRIDAY 20 DECEMBER 10am.** Online Coffee. (Link will be sent out or contact Les or Judith).

**SUNDAY 22 DECEMBER**

**10.30am.** Carol Service led by Rev. Mark Godfrey.

**6pm.** Wesley Sunday Share via Zoom. (Link will be sent out or contact Les or Judith).

**CHRISTMAS DAY 10.30am.** Christmas Day Service led by Deacon Gary Hoare.

**SUNDAY 29 DECEMBER 10.30am** Morning Worship led by Andrew Brown.

**SUNDAY 5 JANUARY 2025 10.30am** Covenant Service led by Rev. Gordon Hay.

**TUESDAYS. 10.30am to 1pm.** Wesley Wheelie Welcome Café/ . Tuesday 03 Dec. - Christmas Music including bric-a-brac stall. 10.30 - 1.00pm. Tuesday 10th and 17th December - Christmas Music Cafe.

*Please note there will be no Welcome Café on 24th and 31st December.*

## WESLEY WHEELIE WELCOME CAFE COFFEE ROTA

		10.30am—12.00	12.00-1am
03	DEC	Jean and Wendy	David and Les
10	DEC	Eileen and Ian	Maureen and Mike
17	DEC	Jean and Wendy	Pat and Judith
24	DEC	NO COFFEE	MORNING
31	DEC	NO COFFEE	MORNING

## CHRISTMAS AT WESLEY



**Sunday 22 December 10.30am.** Carol service led by Rev. Mark Godfrey. .

**25 December 10.30am.** Christmas Day Service led by Deacon Gary Hoare.

**5 January 2025 10.30am.** Covenant Service led by Rev. Gordon Hay

*Please note that there will not be a Christmas Eve service at Wesley this year. See pp17-19 for details of Christmas Eve Services around the circuit.*

Every day throughout Advent there will be a short reading and/or prayer posted on the Nidd Valley Circuit Facebook page.

## WESLEY FELLOWSHIP

### 2024 Programme

We are coming to the end of another successful Wesley Fellowship season. In our November meeting we welcomed Rev. Angie and Deacon Gary to tell us more about themselves, and interesting it was too.

Our last meeting is on 12 December when Rev Brian Hoare will give a talk entitled 'Advent Customs around the World'.

Wesley Fellowship will resume in March. Do come and join us if you are able.

#### *2024 Season.*

*March - Welcome back and St. Peter's handbell ringers.*

*11 April 'All-sorts' Quiz – led by Les Sudron.*

*09 May. 'Best medicine' led by Frank Ellis.*

*13 June. 'An afternoon with the minister' led by Rev. Gordon Hay.*

*11 July. 'Hobbies and Collections (stamps, coins, key rings etc.) with David and you???' Everyone invited to bring along their favourite things to show and tell their story.*

*08 August. 'Beetle Drive' - last year's was so competitive and full of fun!*

*12 September. 'Monologues, Poems, Tales and other things..' with Jenny and you. Bring along your favourite poem, short story, funny story or joke!*

*10 October. 'Let me introduce another Harrogate composer' led by Andrew Hitchen.*

*14 November 'Open House' led by Deacon Gary and Rev Angie Hoare.*

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### Christmas 2024



There will be retiring collections for Christian Aid on Christmas Day and on the Sundays in Advent. Any contributions (cash or cheques made payable to 'Christian Aid' for this important and life-changing charity would be greatly valued.

Many thanks, Ulrike Hitchen

# CHRISTMAS

Thank you for thinking  
of us at this festive  
time of year!



## Christmas gifts our clients would love to receive:

-  Gift vouchers:  
Asda, Love2Shop, Primark,  
Greggs, Costa
-  Adult colouring books & pens
-  Mini Diaries
-  Thermos flasks/mugs
-  Boxer shorts & knickers
-  Fluffy socks
-  Perfume/aftershave
-  Makeup/cosmetics
-  Chocolate/sweets

*\*All items  
must be new  
or unopened  
please.*

## Other ways to support HHP:

-  Financial donations
-  Food/drinks donations  
such as pot noodles, tinned meat products,  
fresh fruit juices, hot chocolate and coffee
-  Sleeping bag donations
-  Visit our Just Giving page at  
[justgiving.com/hhp](http://justgiving.com/hhp)

## Sorry, we can't accept the following:

- Alcohol or any products containing alcohol
- Out of date items
- Opened packets of food
- Baby products or children's items of any kind
- Pet food • Mini toiletries

Please telephone the hostel on the number below 01423 566900,  
to book a time to drop off your donations

### **Message from Susan Miller**

Thank you to all my friends at Wesley for the lovely card and good wishes on my special birthday. I had a super day with all my family.

Thank you for keeping me updated in the Focus with all your news.

God Bless you all

Susan.

### **Knitter of the Year**

The prize for the knitter of the year award has to be given to Margaret Stangroom who, incidentally, qualifies for the best domino player award as well. A busy lady.

Wesley's good friend Kay Smith (photo below) called on me to collect Margaret's latest contribution to charity knitting which is facilitated by Kay (another busy lady). Kay tells me that the previous load of knitting she collected included hats for premature babies which went to a hospital in Ipswich, pram and cot blankets which were given to Syrian immigrants in North Leeds and jumpers which were hand delivered by a lady from Oatlands to grateful recipients near Mombasa. Margaret really does have the whole world in her hands! Keep those needles busy Margaret. Thank you and well done. All this as well as keeping the Sudron family well supplied with all types of knitted garments.

Thank you Kay for acting as distributor.

Lynne Harvey



## KNITTED BIBLE EXHIBITION

The Knitted Bible Exhibition was held at Bilton Area Methodist Church in November. It was a great success, during the week many schools in the area visited and members of Bilton Area were on hand to answer questions from the youngsters. Janet, Pat and Andrew visited the exhibition and Janet send us these photographs.



*5 loaves and 2 fishes*



*Palm Sunday*



*Noah's Ark*



*Moses and the 10 Commandments*



*Knitted Bible continued.*



There is an intruder in the boat. It was put there for the children to find. Do you know who it is? (*Answer at the bottom of the page*).

### **Christmas comes to Harrogate**



The Christmas lights adorn the town; Harrogate is full of shoppers and the big wheel is up and running. We sent Ian out to take a photograph.

*Who is in the boat with the disciples? Answer: Rev. Angie*

## DESERT ISLAND DISCS



*This month Ed is our castaway.*

I found this an interesting and very difficult exercise. I had great trouble picking out 8 artists never mind 8 tracks. I was hoping to get a dispensation so that I could take my iPod but to no avail. Here goes:

*Final movement of Beethoven's 9 th symphony.* As a teenager I was not interested in classical music until I came across this piece of music. It was in the film Clockwork Orange. I came out of the film knowing I had to have the record (record...that shows how long ago it was). I did manage to get a copy and it has been a favourite ever since.

*And can it be - Charles Wesley.* I think hymns are a wonderful way of worshipping God. So I would need a hymn on my island. This hymn has it all. It never fails to lift me, telling me the cost that Christ paid for me. It then moves to my freedom and the crown that awaits me.

*Rock me – Blind Boys of Alabama.* This could be classed as a spiritual/gospel/rock song. I came across this band on the Jools Holland New Year show and then this song on one of his compilation albums. The music bounces along and the words are so uplifting in the praise that gives praise to God. It is difficult not to get up and dance along.

*Layla – Derek and the Dominoes.* For those that may not know 'Derek' was Eric Clapton. I heard this song when rock guitarists were the bee's knees. Eric Clapton was up there with the best. From the very start of the song the guitar sound is amazing. The words are poignant. A number of years later on my mobile phone I had this as my ringtone.

*Continued*

*Thank you Ed for your brilliant choices, which I've thoroughly enjoyed listening to, I am sure others will too. Next month Eliza is our castaway. Judith*

*Ed's Desert Island Discs*

*Virginia Plain – Roxy Music.* I first heard Roxy Music on The Old Grey Whistle Test. They played this track. They were not a mainstream Top of the Pops band. When they came on the screen their costumes were for my taste a bit over the top. However, once they started to play the music to this song I was not bothered about their costumes. They were one of first bands I came across that were using a synthesiser to produce some incredible sounds. The words are interesting as the subject of the song is a type of tobacco.

*On the border – The Eagles.* It was not long after we had been married that a friend of mine lent me an LP (as it was then). He was full of praise for it. It was *On the Border* by the Eagles. I listened to the LP and was totally taken by the sounds. I could have picked any one of their albums and any one of their songs but have picked the title track from that first album I heard.

*Skyfall – Adele.* This is the title track to a James Bond film of the same name. I was not listening to a lot of radio at the time so was not really aware of Adele. Then when the film was coming up for release this track was played a lot on the radio. I was immediately taken by the voice and the music. I mentioned this to our youngest son and he bought me an Adele CD (CD....more up to date now). I was not disappointed. All the songs were and still are great. Unfortunately the song I have selected is not on any of her albums. However, it introduced me to a fantastic new singer/songwriter artist.

*I'm yours – The Script.* Our youngest son bought me the CD The Script being their first album. He knew I had not heard of them but told me I would like it. He was right. The lyrics are thought provoking and a bit raw at times and the music outstanding. When Eliza and I do a bit of cooking on a Saturday night I love to play this album. It gives me the chance to really listen to the lyrics. When this song comes on it is time for us to drop utensils and do a smoochie dance in the kitchen. It is a brilliant love song.

I take this chance to offer my apologies to the twenty odd artists who made this short list but not the final cut.

Many thanks to Judith who gave me the challenge of this exercise. It has definitely shaken up the old gray cells.

*'Music is heaven's best gift to humanity.'* Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

## John Wesley's New Room



My brother who lives in Wells in Somerset recently attended a lecture at his local history society on John Wesley's New Room in Bristol. In recent years it gained extra funding and the site now includes a museum, chapel, cafe, shop and library. Described as 'a hidden gem in the heart of Bristol since 1739' it is on the tourist trail and especially popular with visitors from the USA. Present day visitors will be interested to learn that Wesley preached against the slave trade and the Bristol merchants paid for hecklers to come and disrupt his sermons. Details are: John Wesley's New Room, 36 The Horsefair, Bristol, BS1 3JE. Tel: 0117 926 4740. Website: [www.newroombristol.org.uk](http://www.newroombristol.org.uk)

**Janet Allen**

### CHRISTMAS QUOTES

'Christmas is a togethery sort of holiday. That's my favourite kind.'. *A. A. Milne (from Winnie the Pooh)/*

'And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.' *John 1:14 (ESV).*

'Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!'. *2 Corinthians 9:15 (NIV)*

'Seeing is believing, but sometimes the most real things in the world are the things we can't see'. *The Polar Express (2004)*

'What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store. What if Christmas... perhaps... means a little bit more!'. *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas (1966)*

'May the hope, the peace, the joy, and the love represented by the birth in Bethlehem this night fill our lives and become part of all that we say and do;'. *Rev. Richard J. Fairchild*

## THE WORK OF DEACON GARY

Deacon Gary Hoare has written a report to churches detailing highlights of some of the things he has been involved with since being in the Nidd Valley Circuit. Below is an extract from his report. Gary also asks for your urgent prayers:

- For the Christmas Charity stall in Harrogate on Friday 6 December from 2.30pm – 7.30pm, for more helpers, good conversations and great weather. May the Lord bless everyone involved.
- Prayers for Trinity wanting to reach out carol singing on 12 December in the town pubs and eating places, and 19<sup>th</sup> around the St., Georges area HG2, for a response from people on the estate.
- For carol singing in the Shepherd's Dog pub on 23 December.
- Cards being delivered on the Watcombe Estate for Christmas.

Gary writes: '...Angie and I have been in the Nidd Valley Circuit for over 12 months now. We arrived from Weston super Mare in Somerset, having completed 8 years working in that circuit.....'

The main area I have been looking at is, what we can do with new and developing housing estates. ...there are a lot of estates popping up around Harrogate and Knaresborough, and more are planned near in the Whinney Lane area and Kirk Hammerton. I have spent time wandering around seeing who is around on these estates, what the estates are made up of, trying to find out what people do with their time; where they take their children to school; what facilities the estates have for communities to meet together; trying to find out these things may help us deliver something.

I have a lot of meetings in cafes around the town, I don't really meet people in churches. This is mainly because I'm determined to take the church out of the building to where people are.

Jennyfields. A new pastor has come to the evangelical church. Jon is a curate who lives on Jennyfields. We meet together and pray, I support them as at the Community Sports Centre, where there is the Rachel Daley's Community Café. They make tea and coffee quite often for people passing by. The money helps to pay for the junior football team that plays on the field there at the weekends. They are doing this to help understand the community they are in and also to serve a need. They are also witnesses to God whilst they are there.'

**Gary Hoare**

## LUNCHTIME RECITALS

### 2024/2025 season

This season, we are pleased to be able to take card and contactless payments on the door (£12).

## LUNCHTIME RECITALS

**Monday, 2 December 2024 1pm.** Elena Urioste (violin), Tom Poster (piano). They will perform the following:

Leoš Janáček - Violin Sonata

Dora Pejačević - Canzonetta, Op. 8

Dora Pejačević - Élégie, Op. 34

Johannes Brahms - Violin Sonata No. 1 in G major, Op. 78

**Monday, 6 January 2025 (1pm)** Ashley Riches (bass-baritone), Joseph Middleton (piano). The programme will include songs by Schubert, Brahms, Richard Strauss, Wolf, Fauré, Ravel and Howells. It is our Leeds Lieder recital, Joseph Middleton being Director of the Leeds Lieder Festival (5th to 12th April 2025).

Monday, 3 February 2025 (1pm) artist to be confirmed

Monday, 3 March 2025 (1pm) artist to be confirmed

Monday, 7 April 2025 (1pm) Jess Dandy (contralto), Simon Lepper (piano)

## AFTERNOON CONCERT

**Saturday 18 January 2025 at 3pm.** Ariel Lanyi, piano. Prizewinner at the 2021 Leeds International Piano Competition. Schubert Sonata in G Major, D.894, Bartok: 15 Hungarian Peasant Songs Sz.71. Chopin: Sonata No. 3 in B minor. Op.58/ Tickets £18. Free for age 26 and under.

## EVENING CONCERT

**Saturday 15 February 2025 7.30pm.** Jean-Efflam Bavouzet and his wife Andréa Nemečz two-piano recital. Their programme is still to be confirmed, but we're excited to announce that they will be playing on not just one, but two Yamaha grand pianos. This concert is likely to sell out so we strongly encourage you to buy tickets in advance Tickets £20. Free for age 26 and under.



## AROUND THE CIRCUIT

**Bilton Methodist Amblers.** The next walk is Saturday 14 December. All walks start on the car park of Bilton Area Methodist Church where we meet to arrange transport at 9.30. Winter walks generally about 4-6 miles and normally end at a cafe or pub for food. All welcome. If interested please contact Janet Allen, T: 524634

E: [janetallen09@btinternet.com](mailto:janetallen09@btinternet.com)

Future walks: Saturday 11 January, Saturday 8 February, Saturday 8 March.

### **Bilton Area Methodist Church.**

Monday 2nd December 2pm Advent Bible Study

Wednesday 4th December 12.15pm Lunch Club Christmas Party (5 course Christmas Dinner).. Contact us to book a place. [info@biltonareamethodist.org.uk](mailto:info@biltonareamethodist.org.uk)

Saturday 7th December 10 -11.30am Coffee Morning: cafeteria, bacon sausage butties, teacakes, cakes, raffle.

Wednesday 11th December - 12.30pm Quiet Service

Monday 16th December 2pm Advent Bible Study

Sunday 22nd December 16.30 pm Carol Service

Christmas Day 10 am All age worship led by Rev Angie Hoare

### **Gracious Street**

Saturday 7 December 8.45-10.15am: Men's Breakfast with Brian Hoare speaking on Advent Traditions Around the World

Saturday 7 December 12.00-5.00pm: Resurrected Bites Artisan Market – Beautiful work from local artists. Light lunch and refreshments available.

Saturday 14 December 10.00-11.30am: Who Let The Dads Out

Saturday 21 December 3.30-5.00pm: Family Christmas Celebration

Tuesday 24 December 11.30pm: Christmas Eve Service

25 Dec 10.00-11.00: Christmas Day Service

Bridge Café. Mondays 9.30am—11.30am. Gracious Street and UBU. Hot & cold drinks.

Tuesdays 10.00 - 11.30 in conjunction with Harrogate College

Wednesdays 09.30 - 11.30 in conjunction with Gracious Street & Henshaws *Hot & cold drinks, teacakes, scones*

Fridays 10.00 - 2.00pm - Resurrected Bites pay as you feel café

*Hot & cold drinks, breakfast & cooked lunches*

*Last orders at 1.30pm*

*Continued*

*Around the Circuit continued.*

## **Harlow Hill.**

Saturday 14th December 2-4pm – Christmas Fair

Tuesday 24th December 3pm – Crib Service

Christmas Day 10am – Family Christmas Day Service

Coffee Morning. Every Monday from 10am to 11.30am. Everybody welcome.

Little Beans Playgroup. Parents and toddlers playgroup. Every Wednesday Morning. Drop in between 10am and 11.30am for play, coffee and a chat. £3 per family.

## **Pannal**

13 December 7.30pm. Harrogate Male Voice Choir. A Festive Concert followed by light refreshments. Tickets in advance £10. On the night £12. Children 16 and under free, Tickets can be purchased from [pmc.tickets@gmail.com](mailto:pmc.tickets@gmail.com)

## **Scotton**

Saturday 14 December 10am—12 noon. Christmas Coffee Morning. Cake Stall. All are welcome. Proceeds for the chapel.

Christmas Eve 6.30. Carol Service. All are welcome.

## **Starbeck**

Sunday 1 December 2.30pm. An Afternoon of Christmas Music by Treble Clef. . Entry £10 on the door. Concessions: teenagers £5, under 12s free.

## **Trinity**

Christmas Flower Festival on Saturday 7th (10am-4pm) and Sunday 8th December (12-4pm).

*Continued*



## **Trinity**

Thursday 19th December tbc Carol singing in the bars of West Park  
Friday 20 December 7.00pm All Together Now concert  
Sunday 22 December traditional Carol Service  
Monday 23 December 12.30pm Blue Christmas – a gentle carol service for those who are feeling low – beginning with a light lunch.  
Tuesday 24th Dec 3.00pm Crib service. 11.30pm Midnight communion at Pannal.  
Christmas Day 10.45am. Christmas morning praise – join in our annual Christmas clothing competition and don't forget to bring your presents

## **Woodlands.**

Tuesday 10 December Carol singing at Berwick Grange 6.30pm- Everyone Welcome, the more the merrier either meet at Berwick Grange at 6.30pm or at Woodlands at 6.15pm

Wednesday 11 December Ladies Circle Carols and Communion

Tuesday 17 December Harrogate Male Voice Choir concert 7.00pm – Festive entertainment with refreshments

Toast Community cafe every Friday morning in term time. Everyone welcome from 8.45-10.00am. We're a pay-as-you-feel café serving tea, coffee, toast and chat. Unplug, Reconnect, Refill.

Lunch Club Fridays in term time. Would you enjoy a home-cooked 3 course lunch in good company? Get in touch on 07966 715215. Book your place today.

Craft Group. Alternate Thursday mornings, 7th and 21st November 10.00-11.30am Bring your own crafts or join in with group project. Refreshments and chat.

Community Garden (behind the church) open to all every day.

## REGIONAL SAFEGUARDING ONLINE CONFERENCE.



# EVERY STORY MATTERS

**The theme chosen for the Regional Safeguarding Conference this year is based around the Justice, Dignity and Solidarity (JDS) strategy which was adopted by the Methodist Conference of 2021.**

### **Stories of Journeys - 3th February at 1:30pm**

Where have we come from as a church? Who have been the pioneers, what lessons have been learned from where it went wrong.

Led by Revd Helen Cameron

### **Stories of Justice - 4th February at 7:30pm**

Coordinated by the young people from our districts, sharing stories that have come from 3Generate and the church priorities.

### **Stories of Dignity - 5th February at 10am**

The lived reality of inclusion in the church. What a safe space feels like and what it feels like when church is not safe.

Led by Pauline Jackson

### **Stories of Solidarity - 6th February at 1:30pm**

Examples of good practice, stories of where things are working well and the positive impact of finding a safe space in church.

Led by Revd Mark Rowland

<https://2025ourstories.eventbrite.co.uk>



## Theology and Physics: Victorian or Modern?

Seminar led by Dr. Jon Reynolds

**Saturday 7th December 2024 Woodlands Methodist Church – 10am to 12 noon**

How do we relate our thinking about God with modern scientific ideas and how much of that thinking is based on both Victorian theology and Victorian science?

Dr. Jon Reynolds has had an interest in the science and religion debate since secondary school, and has taught both Religious Studies and Physics. He has trained Religious Studies teachers and taught undergraduate courses in science and religion.

Jon was the Director of Education for the St Albans Diocese from 1999 till his retirement from full-time work in 2015. He has been an Anglican Reader since 1990 and is an Honorary Lay Canon of St Albans.

Cost - £5 for attendance at lecture (including breakfast from 9.30am and refreshments), under 18s free. Tickets at the door by contactless card.

**Live Lectures 24/25.** We are delighted to confirm our dates and speakers for the 2024/25 Live Lecture programme:

- 18/01/2025 – Arun Arora
- 22/03/2025 – Nicola Slee

All lectures will be held at St Mark's Church, Leeds Road, Harrogate.



## **A Statement in response to the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury from the Methodist Church in Britain**

In light of the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury following the Makin Review into abuses by the late John Smyth QC, the Methodist Church in Britain joins others in praying for all those affected by abuse. Survivors have been courageous in speaking of their experience and in calling the Churches to account and we hope humbly to continue to learn from them.

We are covenant partners with the Church of England, an anniversary we marked last month. Dr Welby has done much to strengthen the partnership between our denominations and we pray for the continuation of this work and for those who will discern who should be the next Archbishop of Canterbury. We are committed to developing our shared understanding and desire for good safeguarding practice at every level of our churches.

### **A prayer**

Loving God, we ask your forgiveness for the times when in your Church we have failed to protect vulnerable people.

We pray for your healing for those who have been hurt and for those who live with guilt and regret.

We ask for your wisdom and direction as we seek to keep safe all your children, in the name of Christ. Amen.

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## **Shine Your Light**

### **Imagine 100,000 Christians on the streets at Christmas singing Carols and sharing the Gospel everywhere!**

A nationwide Christmas campaign called Shine Your Light, will be taking place this year over the weekend of 13-15 December 2024.

This UK and Ireland grassroots movement saw over 75,000 Christians from over 700 churches take their Carol services and nativity events into shopping centres, town halls, high streets and public spaces last December. This was suggested by many leaders to be one of the largest Christmas outreaches on behalf of the UK Church.

*continued*

*Shine your light continued.*

Shine Your Light is a united collaboration of many Christian Denominations, organisations, local churches, and networks; including The Salvation Army, Bible Society, Evangelical Alliance and hundreds of local congregations in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic.

Many church and national leaders endorsed the event including the Prime Minister, Downing Street and politicians. The weekend was highlighted by many media outlets including *Good Morning Britain* where hundreds of thousands heard that Shine Your Light was about proclaiming Christ at Christmas!

As a result of Shine Your Light last year, we heard stories of people coming to faith and churches welcoming in new people. It showed that when Christians come together for the Gospel, whole communities can be reached!

This Christmas, the vision is to mobilise over 100,000 Christians outdoors to reach 1 million people in the streets and public places with the Gospel. Last year, we heard of hundreds of flashmob style carol events, open air Christingle services and nativity events from the small to the large including some in Castles, country parks and housing estates.

This year, the vision is to see how the united Church can put CHRIST back into Christmas so that the whole nation can hear the bold proclamation of Good News and why we sing “*Joy To The World!*”

All our Shine Your Lights events are solely focused on enabling the true message of Christmas to be heard by those outside the Church. While it is acknowledged, Church attendance increases during the Christmas season, there will be many who will not darken the door of a church.

The church has a unique opportunity this year in towns, villages and cities to bring Light and Joy to many through our boldness and unity.

<https://www.shineyourlight.org.uk/vision/>

## The Church of England and the Methodist Church in Britain recommit to working together as Covenant turns 21



Anglicans and Methodists in England underlined our commitment to forging closer ties as we marked the 21st anniversary of an historic covenant between our two churches.

The Anglican-Methodist Covenant was signed by leaders of the Church of England and the Methodist Church in Great Britain in front of Queen Elizabeth II on 1 November, 2003, with services of celebration at both Methodist Central Hall and its immediate neighbour Westminster Abbey.

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York, Justin Welby and Stephen Cottrell joined with the President of the Methodist Conference, the Revd. Helen Cameron and the Vice President of the Methodist Conference, Carolyn Godfrey, on Monday 4 November to reaffirm the two Churches commitment to the Covenant. The celebration took place at Methodist Central Hall Westminster followed by evensong at Westminster Abbey.

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### The First Christmas by Marian Swinger

It never snows at Christmas in that dry and dusty land.  
Instead of freezing blizzards, there are palms and drifting sands,  
and years ago a stable and a most unusual star  
and three wise men who followed it, by camel, not by car,  
while, sleepy on the quiet hills, a shepherd gave a cry.  
He'd seen a crowd of angels in the silent starlit sky.  
In the stable, ox and ass stood very still and calm  
and gazed upon the baby, safe and snug in Mary's arms.  
And Joseph, lost in shadows, face lit by an oil lamp's glow  
stood wondering, that first Christmas Day, two thousand years ago



## PRAYERS CORNER

### Prayer for Advent

In this season of Advent, we give you thanks, O God our Father, for the gift of your Son. Jesus Christ whose coming to this world was proclaimed by prophets of old and who was born for us in the loneliness and poverty of Bethlehem.

As once again we prepare for Christmas. Help us to find time in our busy lives for quiet and thought and prayer, that we may reflect on the wonder of your love and allow the story of the Saviour's birth to penetrate our hearts and minds.

So may our joy be deeper, our worship more real, and our lives worthier of all that you have done for us through the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **A prayer that we see the world through God's eyes**

If we see the world through your eyes, Lord,  
then we see a vision of our world as your love would have it:  
a world where all who are weak are protected and none go hungry;  
a world where your riches of creation are shared for everyone to enjoy them;  
a world where mutual respect is expressed between different races and cultures and harmony descends;  
a world where peace is built with justice, and justice is guided by love.  
Give us the inspiration and courage to build it how you see it Lord!  
That all may praise together and the only power exerted is the power of your love. Amen.

*Gwynn Bamford, supernumerary deacon, Bromsgrove and Redditch Circuit*

### **A prayer of blessing**

The angels are still singing.  
Prophets are still speaking.  
Hush the noise, hear them sing, repeat the song.  
And the blessing of God,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
be yours/ours, now and always. **Amen.**



Methodist Women in Britain  
Lidgett Methodist Church YO26 5NH  
5 December 10.00/30 – 15.00



**Programme**  
to include:  
Exploring various  
festivals,  
Making  
Christingles  
Lunch  
MWiB business

# “Festival of Light”



**Bring and share lunch.**

## SleepOut 4 Homelessness January 18th 2025

Donate here!



**Want to help support charities that are tackling homelessness?**

**Why not get involved in #Sleepout25 by:**



For further details please contact: [admin@yorkshiremethodist.org](mailto:admin@yorkshiremethodist.org)

This January we're supporting:



Preventing Youth Homelessness Together



No love that in a family dwells,  
No carolling in frosty air,  
Nor all the steeple-shaking bells  
Can with this single Truth compare -  
That God was man in Palestine  
And lives today in Bread and Wine.

*From John Betjeman's poem Christmas*