



NEWSLETTER

Winter 2024

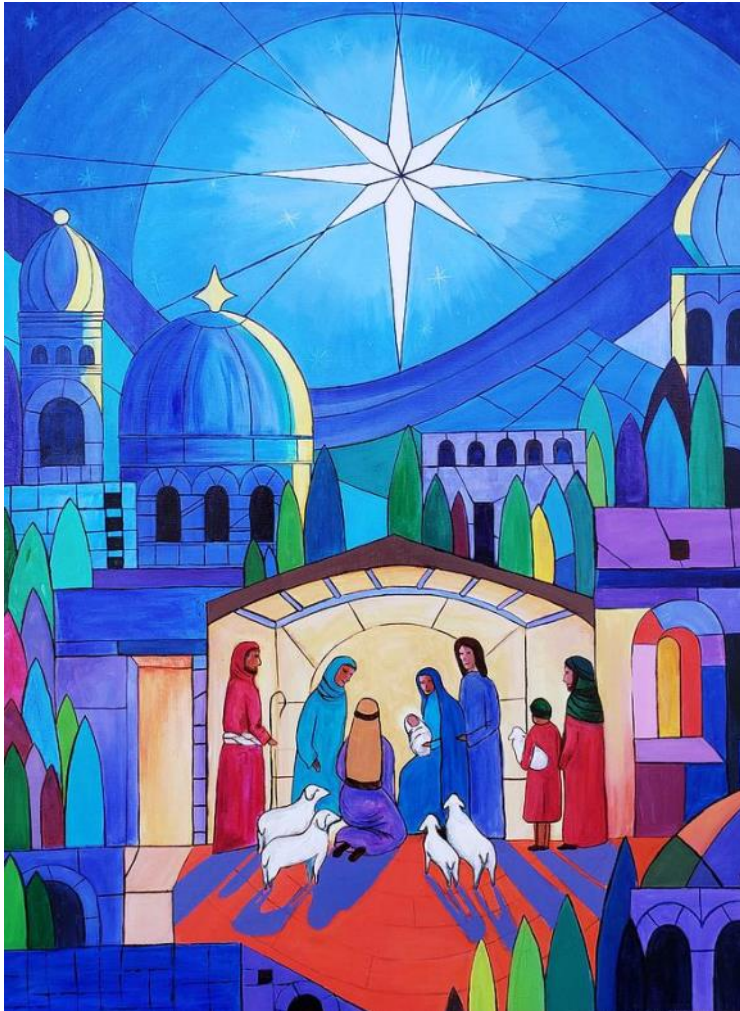
No. 282

Brighton & Hove Methodist



Circuit of Sanctuary

Dorset Gardens Methodist Church, Brighton



A Letter from the Manse

Dear Friends

'I wish it could be Christmas every day' is a line in a familiar Christmas song written and sung by Roy Wood and Wizzard. The sentimental nature of the song does make it seem like an idyllic time, well if you like snow and wrapping up in snugly bedclothes in front of a lovely fire and the like. But for so many that is not the Christmas they get.

The song doesn't look at all the stress of battling in the shops to buy the cards, the appropriate presents, the decorations and the food to make sure you can feed an army let alone the family for the few hours the shops aren't open.

It doesn't take into account the stress of wondering if you're going to receive a card or present from someone you have not got one for.

It doesn't take note of families stressing each other out during their enforced time together, the relatives you look forward to seeing and when you have you remember why you only see them once a year.

The snow might be nice but the cold and damp seeps into our bones and we hope it is soon gone and doesn't turn into treacherous ice.

And that is for those who have a roof over their head, for those who have enough income coming into the household, for those who are not overwhelmed by grief and loneliness for those whose lives are not in the shadow of illness.

Arnold Kellet (1926-2009) a Methodist preacher and poet from Yorkshire wrote:

'Christmas is humbug!'
Said old Ebenezer –
But food's overflowing
From every fat freezer.
And drink's over-brimming
From bottle and barrel.
And atmosphere oozes
From candle and carol,
And such is our fill
Of Dickensian pleasure
That past comprehension
Are those who would measure
Our lordly indulgence;
Expenses are huge –
And we don't care a crumb
For pathetic old scrooge...
But pause in your pleasures;
The context is grim:
The *real* Tiny Tim,
The sick and the starving
Who cry in the night...
Hypocrites all of us!
Scrooge was dead right!
Christ came to teach us
Compassion and sharing:
Away with all humbug!
Christmas is caring.

I hope that you all have a good Christmas and, that while you care for others, you too feel cared for.

Andy

Pastoral Care

Please pray for our friends who need our support at this time:-

Deaths:-

June Russell (June Cooke's sister-in-law)

In Nursing, Care & Rehabilitation Homes:-

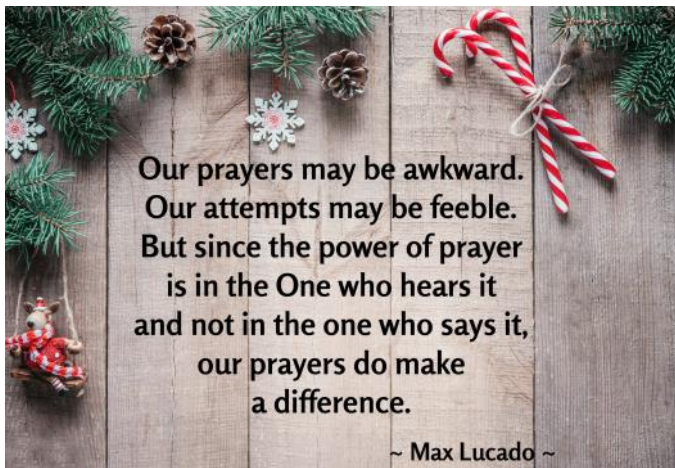
Val Boyd-Pain, Marian Jackson, Pat Knight, Ian Parker.

Please continue to pray for:-

The future of our church and circuit, its vision and mission. We also pray for those who are in bereavement, those who are frail, housebound or experiencing long-term health conditions.

Prayers for the World:-

We pray for our worldwide family thinking of those troubled by conflict, persecution, hatred and natural disasters. We ask that God works through us to bring peace and compassion into this broken and suffering world. Amen





The Baptism of Paige Charlotte Dyke



Visiting Cynthia Tudor in Chiswick

Dr. Janie Thomas, MBE

22 July 1938 – 10 July 2024



On 29 August, Janie Thomas' friends and family gathered first at the crematorium and then at Dorset Gardens to share their memories of a most remarkable woman.

"Janie" was in fact her middle name. She decided as a very little girl that her given name, "Doreen," didn't suit her and she would be Janie! That tells you something of the determination and single-mindedness that marked her life. Janie got her first degree at the LSE. She became a social worker and earned an MBE for services to social work. After a spell in Hong Kong, she and her husband George, also a social worker, came to Brighton where their son Pete went to Sussex University. Janie followed and gained a PhD.

Janie was politically very astute and as secretary of the Kingscliffe Society made an enormous contribution to the community. This and all her activities were animated by her great faith and determined positive outlook. This was greatly tested by George's death in 2016, but she continued to come to Thursday's Prayer and Praise, staying on for Open House and amusing everyone with her knitting efforts! She claimed to have no creative ability, but she had once been a great knitter and her Art Club achievements were a delight.

Janie became very frail and her last months were marked by sudden declines and then, just as sudden, a recovery, until on 10 July she finally responded to God's call to his side. We will miss her wisdom, her quiet elegance, her self-deprecating humour, her ease with all sorts of people, and her strong desire that the world be a better place for the neediest and the most humble. We thank God for Janie.

Cynthia Park





Sunday 17th
November

The Baptism of Maya-Jean



Happy 2nd Birthday
Kevin!



The Star

When I was at St Margaret's School in Ditchling, each Christmas the Infants put on the Nativity Play. It was our aim to involve all the children. It is a smallish school and this involved seventy children. It did mean the angel choir, the flock of sheep, number of page boys to the Wise Men, etc, became quite numerous but it also meant every infant could dress up and take part.



However, one year a small boy called Kevin refused to be any of these! His teacher came to me saying she didn't know what to do. We agreed to think about it overnight particularly as we knew his mother was already worried about him. Next morning, before school, his teacher came to me saying, "I have had an idea, I could make a star, put it on a stick and he could be the star followed by the Wise Men - in fact the star of the show!" I also believe it will have more importance if you tell him he's going to be the star of the show. I agreed this was a good idea and so she brought him to me at playtime. When he came I said, "Kevin, you know the Wise Men followed a star, well we want you to be that star, in fact the star of the show!" He promptly burst into tears saying, "I don't think I want to hang on the ceiling!" When his teacher and I had recovered and assured him he would be walking in front of the Wise Men carrying the star on a stick he wiped his tears and agreed to take part. He played his part beautifully; his Mum was pleased. However, I thought teachers were supposed to be good communicators!

Jean Morley





*When I think of Christmas,
I see soft white glistening snow;
I hear carols from King's College
Come on the radio.*

*I see decorated Christmas trees,
And log fires all aglow,
As, again, we tell that story
Which began so long ago.*

*Where a baby in a manger
Was born so God could show
How much he cares for all of us
More than we'll ever know.*

(John Darley, from The Friendship Book 2024)

Tearaway Tots News



Tearaway Tots has been going from strength to strength, adding a new Monday morning session this term and seeing more new families join us. Our three weekly sessions are supporting around 40 families each week. Morrisons are very kindly supporting us with free fruit and toys.

We've had visits from the Oral Health Team, BHESCO, First Aid support and have more community support visitors booked in between now and Christmas, including a visit from Santa himself!

We are looking to increase our volunteer team so, if you are interested in helping, please speak to me or email me at samantha.dyke@dgm.org.uk

Sam Dyke

Late 20th Century Christmas Carols

When our previous hymn book, *Hymns & Psalms* was published in 1983, only three newly composed carols were included and all of them became popular enough to be included in our current hymn book, *Singing the Faith*, published in 2011.

The three carols were **“Born in the Night, Mary’s Child”** written and composed by Geoffrey Ainger in 1960, **“Come and Join the Celebration”** written and composed by Valerie Collison in 1972 and **“See him Lying on a Bed of Straw”** written and composed by Michael Perry in 1964.

Geoffrey Ainger (1925-2013) was a hymnwriter and Methodist minister, born in Mistley, near Manningtree in Essex. He served in the Church Army and trained for the Methodist ministry at Richmond College and was ordained in 1953. In 1956 he went to New York, where he worked with an ecumenical Team Ministry at East Harlem, and gained a Master’s degree from Union Theological Seminary. He then returned to England to work as a Methodist minister at Loughton, Essex. **“Born in the Night, Mary’s Child”** was first published in *Songs from Notting Hill* (1964), and achieved wider circulation in *Hymns & Songs* (1969)

Valerie Collison (born 1933) was born in Bromley and educated at Bromley Grammar School for Girls and worked as a medical secretary at Bromley, Salisbury and Exeter, before retirement to Devon. **“Come and Join the Celebration”** was first published in *Carols for Children* in 1972. Her only other popular hymn is “The Journey of Life” which is part of *Come and Praise* hymnal which is used in Primary Schools, but some of her hymns have also been published in Scripture Union’s *Praise God Together* (1985).

Michael Perry (1942-1996) was a Church of England clergyman closely associated with *Jubilate Hymns*. Born in Beckenham, Kent he was educated at Dulwich College and went on to study at University College, London, Oak Hill Theological College, Ridley Hall, Cambridge and University of Southampton.

It was during his time at Oak Hill that he wrote his best-known hymn **“See him lying on a bed of straw”** more commonly known as **“The Calypso Carol”**. He wrote this for a college concert but it became famous when Cliff Richard sang it on a radio show.

After ordination he served at St Helens, Merseyside; Bitterne, Southampton; Eversley, Hampshire and as Chaplain and Lecturer at the National Police Staff College, Bramshill before he was elected to the Church of England’s General Synod in 1985. He was on the committees that produced the popular hymn books *Psalm Praise* (1973) and *Hymns for Today’s Church* (1982). He became Secretary of *Jubilate Hymns* in 1982 and was involved in editing most of their books.

His last posting was as Vicar of Tonbridge from 1989 until 1996 and he was appointed Chairman of the Church Pastoral Aid Society in 1993, and again to the General Synod in 1994.

In *Singing the Faith* there are 13 newly composed Christmas Carols included. It remains to be seen how many (if any) will stand the test of time and become popular carols of future Christmas celebrations. Maybe we will be singing some of them this Christmas.

Ian Lamb



Thoughts for Quiet Reflection

- Look for God's good work each day.
- God never tires of hearing me.
- My words and actions can show God's love to those around me.



The Candle Beautiful



The Candle is one of the oldest Christian symbols, and it has played an honoured role in the celebration of Christmas for centuries.

In medieval times it was said that on Christmas Eve, Christ wandered through town and countryside in search of those who believed in Him. On that night, Christians placed candles in their windows to guide Him through the darkness to their homes. It was also customary to give warm welcome to any person who might pass by that way.

Why don't we in imitation of those devout and kindly folk of olden days, light candles each night of the year so as to enable friends to find our door and bring to our homes a Joy that will last forever.

Written by William S Brannan



I LOVE CHRISTMAS
BUT IT REALLY
WEARS ME OUT.



WRITING AND SENDING
ALL THE CHRISTMAS CARDS,
PUTTING UP THE DECOR-
ATIONS, BAKING THE
GOODIES, BUYING AND
WRAPPING THE GIFTS...



WHAT ARE YOU TALK-
ING ABOUT? I'M THE
ONE WHO DOES ALL
THOSE THINGS!



I KNOW, AND WATCH-
ING YOU DO THEM
IS EXHAUSTING!



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Worship Programme at Dorset Gardens

Sunday 8 December ~ Second Sunday of Advent

10.30 am, Morning Worship

Led by Stella Goddard

Sunday 15 December ~ Third Sunday of Advent

9 am, Morning Communion

Led by Andy Lowe

10.30 am, All Age Gift Service

Led by Andy Lowe

Sunday 22 December ~ Fourth Sunday of Advent

10.30 am, Advent Worship with Communion

Led by Andy Lowe

6.30 pm, Service of Healing and Communion

Led by Cynthia Park

Christmas Eve

4 pm, Community Carol Service

(with tea, coffee and mince pies from 3.30 pm)

Led by Andy Lowe



Christmas Day

10.30 am, Christmas Celebration!

Led by Heather Leake Date



Sunday 29 December

10.30 am, Morning Worship

Led by Deeptima Massey

Sunday 5 January 2025 ~ Epiphany & Covenant Sunday

10.30 am, Covenant Service

Led by Andy Lowe

Sunday 12 January

10.30 am, Morning Worship - Led by Beulah Fletcher

Sunday 19 January

10.30 am, Morning Worship - Led by Paul Richards

Sunday 26 January

10.30 am, Circuit Together Service

At Stanford Avenue - Led by Andy Lowe & Karen Bell

6.30 pm, Service of Healing and Communion

At DG - Led by Cynthia Park

Sunday 2 February

10.30 am, Morning Worship with Communion

Led by Cynthia Park

Sunday 9 February

9 am, Morning Communion

Led by Andy Lowe

10.30 am, All Age Worship

Led by Andy Lowe

Sunday 16 February

10.30 am, Morning Worship

Led by Ken Smith

Sunday 23 February

10.30 am, Morning Worship

Led by Geoff Harrington

6.30 pm, Service of Healing and Communion

Led by Cynthia Park

John 3:16

Solution...
For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten
Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish,
but have everlasting life.

Disclaimer: "The items contained within this newsletter are personal views and not necessarily the views of The Methodist Church".