

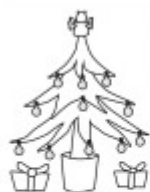
# inter MISSION

PRUDHOE METHODIST CHURCH  
Christmas 2021



Heads of State or humble shepherd, Jesus is God's gift to you all.  
- image acknowledgement Pixabay

What can I give Him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb.



## 1 Corinthians 13 (A Christmas version)



If I decorate my house perfectly with plaid bows, strands of twinkling lights and shiny balls, but do not show love to my family, I am just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas cookies, preparing gourmet meals and arranging a beautifully adorned table at meal times, but do not show love to my family, I am just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen or food bank, carol in the nursing home and give all that I have to charity, but do not show love to my family, it profits me nothing.

If I trim the tree with shimmering angels and lace snowflakes, attend a myriad of holiday parties and sing in the choir's cantata but do not focus on those I love most, I have missed the point.

... in other words

Love stops the cooking to hug a child.

Love sets aside the decorating to kiss the spouse.

Love is kind, although harried and tired.

Love doesn't envy another house that has coordinated Christmas china and table linens.

Love doesn't yell at the kids to get out of the way but is thankful that they are there to be in the way.

Love doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return but rejoices in giving to those who can't.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. :

Love never fails.

Video games will break, pearl necklaces will be lost, golf clubs will rust, But this gift of love will endure for ever.

With acknowledgements to : [www.veybridgemethodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.veybridgemethodistchurch.org.uk)

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What can I give Him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb.  
If I were a wise man, I would do my part.  
Yet what can I give Him? Give Him my heart

## Rev Jenny writes ...

There are lots of interesting articles and stories for you in this month's issue. In particular, we hope you are moved by the stories of the children who benefitted from the kindness of others at Christmas time.



It is easy to get caught up in 'stuff' at Christmas. Decorations, lights, wrapping paper, toys, bubble bath sets, turkey, Christmas crackers - so much 'stuff' crowds into our minds and our planning lists at this time of year.

Interestingly though, there is lots of encouragement on social media this year to give 'experiences' not gifts and this seems extremely appropriate if we are talking of the right experiences. After all, the wartime children helped in our story probably received many gifts in future years but I am sure that their war time Christmas will have proved more memorable than any item they ever received.

I believe that the internet, by urging us to focus on experiences not 'stuff' has, quite unwittingly taken us back to the very heart of the Christmas story. Christ comes into the world as a child and his purpose in doing so, is to offer us an experience of God. The Shepherds and Wisemen would have an unforgettable experience that would mark them for life but it didn't end there. Every crowd that followed Jesus, every individual healed or encouraged by Jesus, Peter and the thief on the cross forgiven by Jesus all experienced the reality of God.

The very first Christmas gift was a child and that child challenges all of us to enable others to experience God. That child challenges all of us to reach out to the poor, to the homeless to those without hope. That child, Jesus, challenges us to reach all of God's Children with an experience of love and hope as we celebrate the peace and joy of the Christmas experience together.



## A Story of Christmas – as told by Allan Waters

The festivities were forgotten that first Christmas of the war. Hitler's Luftwaffe had been bombing London every night and each morning showed the devastation they had caused. Preservation of life was uppermost in everyone's mind. Parents whose work prevented them from leaving town decided that at least they could send their children to safety in the country. Some children were too small to be sent on their own, but the social and welfare workers were equal to the task.

So it was on that Christmas Eve, twenty children aged from five down to a baby of one year, arrived at a small village in Berkshire where there were known to be willing foster parents. The receiving officer welcomed the social and welfare helpers who had travelled with the children in the church hall where warm milk and hot cocoa soon warmed the children's bodies. The foster mothers quickly chose the evacuees they preferred to give a home to, but coloured baby Kenny, crying in his little pram, no one seemed to want. Gradually the hall emptied until only the receiving officer, the social and welfare workers and tiny Kenny were left.

"There's one lady, Maggie Morland, who didn't come this evening," the organiser said. "She has a house full already, but she has a kind heart and may find room for Kenny." So off they went to Maggie's cottage and knocked.

"Not another," said Maggie as she opened the door, "I already have more than I can cope with," but when she saw the stain of tears on Kenny's cheeks and his tight black curly hair, she couldn't refuse him. "I suppose he won't take up much room, seeing he's so small," she said as she picked him out of the pram and cuddled him to her warm body. Kenny had found a good home.

Once the bigger children had been packed off to bed, Maggie put a small tin bath before the fire and then proceeded to undress Kenny for his bath. What a surprise she had then! An envelope was attached to Kenny's vest. Maggie read the words on the outside of the envelope, "This is for the lady who is kind enough to give my baby a home," and inside was a note with the address of the parents and fifty pounds! Maggie was moved to tears, when the tears subsided she looked again at the fifty pounds and realised what could be done with that amount of money, an amount she had never had in all her years.

Of course, she told her neighbours, and there were many foster mothers who wished they had chosen Kenny. They would have if they had known what he had to offer. But Maggie who had received him got her biggest present ever.

You remember the story of the first Christmas when baby Jesus wasn't welcome in Bethlehem because no one recognised what he had to offer. As he grew up some accepted him but the majority turned on him and in the end nailed him to a wooden cross to get rid of him. But those who believed Jesus to be God's son come to earth in the flesh and received him into their lives were rewarded with a place in his heavenly kingdom.

Will you recognise Jesus for who he truly is? For those who do, eternal life with him is their great reward.

**Prayer.** O God, who at this season of the year, permitted Jesus to become the son of man so that we might become the sons of God, help us to recognise the greatness of your gift and to make room for Christ in our lives, so that we may finally be adopted into your heavenly family.  
*Amen,*

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## **The Christmas Journey 2021**

Mon 29th Nov - Fri 3rd Dec at St Mary Magdalene church

We're back! This year we're delighted to be once more welcoming school groups of Year 2 children (6 year olds) into a church building to travel back in time to the very first Christmas. They will meet all the characters from the biblical accounts of Jesus' birth, get to ask them questions and do a very simple craft to help them remember what they have learned. In total, there will be 200 children from 6 local schools and we have 175 volunteer slots to fill! If you could read a simple script or help the children complete a very basic craft activity, please contact Samantha on [christmas.journey.prudhoe@gmail.com](mailto:christmas.journey.prudhoe@gmail.com) or 01661 836059 or speak to Anne/Peter to find out more about the project.

Perhaps you can't volunteer: but could you pray? Prayer cards will be out soon but please ask God to raise up sufficient volunteers, funds -and a \*real\* Baby Jesus for every session!



## Christmas 1945 – as told by Ken Graham \*\*

It was late October 1945, about six weeks before the first peacetime Christmas since 1938. I had recently arrived at a Royal Air Force station at a little place called Vaughn(?) midway between Cologne and Dusseldorf, in a war-ravaged Germany. We were housed in what had been German Army Cavalry barracks. The commanding officer of this unit called his officers and senior NCO's together and informed them that he had discovered a displaced persons' camp about three kilometres outside of Cologne. There were many of these camps dotted all over Europe, but this one, he said, was quite different.

It was run by a group of nursing sisters of some religious order. The occupants of the camp were all children, from toddlers to about fourteen years old ... all 112 of them. Some had been born in concentration camps, others had seen their parents marched into the gas-chambers. And now the sisters were trying to find out who they were and where they were from; perhaps relatives could be traced. In the meantime, he said, he was sure that all the men in his unit would make this Christmas one that all these kids would remember.

The news spread like wildfire ... committees were formed and groups organised. Shops, of course, were devoid of toys and Christmas novelties, so ingenuity had to be used. It was quite amazing to walk into a barrack room and find some of the roughest, toughest, hard-drinking and hard-swearing men, who had faced death and destruction for the past five years, busy making cuddly toys, paper hats and streamers. Doors and window-frames disappeared from the unused huts on the site, and were transformed overnight into sledges, rocking horses, trucks and all kinds of wondrous toys. Everyone handed in their "chocky" ration (when it was available) to the canteen manager to store away ready for the great day.

Christmas Eve arrived, and the RAF trucks were loaded with goods including a field kitchen. Turkeys had been roasted, ready to be transported to the camp ... our turkeys I might add, flown in from England for *our* Christmas dinner, but who cared? We arrived at the camp that evening when all the kids were in bed. A huge canvas aircraft hangar, rather like a marquee, was erected, trestle tables were laid out, decorations festooned all over. A Christmas tree placed in a prominent position, with strings of coloured lights manufactured by RAF electricians. All was ready for the big day.

Christmas morning; the trucks rolled again to the children's camp, this time loaded with the toys and a parcel for each child, containing a pair of knitted gloves (the women's RAF had been very busy too!) , also a bar of sweets and chocolate and a little tablet of scented soap. We arrived at the camp, with Santa Claus in the lead. The children were all brought into the tent. Wide-eyed with wonder, never before had they seen such a wondrous sight. Santa Claus gave each child at least one toy and a parcel of goodies. Games were played, party hats issued ... and yet, strange as it may seem ... the one item the kids loved most was that little piece of scented soap. They kept pushing them under everyone's nose, unable to believe such luxury.

The RAF cooks served up the Christmas dinner; turkey, roast potatoes, all the trimmings... followed of course by plum pudding and lashings of lovely sauce. The sisters said there was enough left to feed them for the rest of the week!

It was time for us to leave. The Mother Superior thanked us for our efforts and said these children had nothing to give, nothing materially to give in return, but they had rehearsed something just for us. The children gathered round, one-hundred-and-twelve kids, innocent victims of man's inhumanity, and they sang Silent Night, Holy Night. This reduced many strong men unashamedly to tears. We drove off to our airfield that night with that lovely feeling one has when having done something nice, and wondering how the world could possibly put right all the wrongs of the past five years. As each Christmas comes along, I wonder if, in various parts of Europe, there are some people in their fifties, sixties, seventy years, who still have in their treasured possessions a little piece of scented soap, compliments of the Royal Air Force, Christmas 1945.

## **\*\* FOOTNOTE**

Ken read his Christmas story for Tynedale Talking Magazine (for visually impaired people) in the Christmas 1997 edition , about eight months before his death. It has been my pleasure and privilege to have worked with Ken for several years as volunteers for Tynedale Talking Newspaper. My sincere thanks to Ken's daughter, Christine, for sending me Ken's recording on the original cassette tape and for giving her permission for publication here. - Pete B



## **Getting to know you – Margaret Glendinning**

### **How did you come to be at PMC?**

Born into a Methodist family, I was baptised at PMC and, like many others, went to Sunday School and played my part at the Sunday School Anniversary. Growing up, I joined the Church Choir, became a Sunday School Teacher and a Trustee.

### **What is your favourite food?**

Fish, mostly, particularly salmon and prawns, with Jersey potatoes and asparagus.

### **What was your best holiday?**

ROME. In Easter, 2004, my niece Carolyn and her family invited me to join them when they visited Peter's brother who taught in the Seminary in the city. Martin became our guide for the duration of our stay and he introduced us to many historical places in the city and in the surrounding area.

### **What is your favourite hymn/song?**

I cherish the Wesley hymns but my choice is "Brother, Sister, let me serve you".

### **What advice would you give to your young self?**

Remember that God loves and cares for all his children.

### **What miracle would you like to see?**

World Peace. If implemented, there may be an answer in the first words of this song, "Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me".

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### **Preparing for Christmas?**

This can be a busy season and if we are not careful we can miss the opportunity to contemplate the mysterious and wonderful birth Christmas is all about. Lay down your lists, plans and concerns. and give Jesus your full attention.



# A CHRISTMAS QUIZ

- [1] Which animal carried Mary before she gave birth to Jesus?
- [2] In which century was the first Christmas card sent?
- [3] Which Angel visited Mary?
- [4] Which famous scientist was born on Christmas Day in 1642?
- [5] What's the most popular tree species used for a Christmas tree?
  
- [6] Which Saint's day falls on 26<sup>th</sup> December?
- [7] Which Christmas sweets are shaped like shepherds' staffs?
- [8] Name the Christmas food comprising a sausage wrapped in bacon?
- [9] Stollen is traditional Christmas confectionery from which country?
- [10] Name one of the two most popular items put on top of a Christmas tree
  
- [11] Carol Aebersold recently created which decorative Christmas figure?
- [12] Tom Smith invented what noisy Christmas novelty in the 1850's?
- [13] The Queen's Speech was first televised in 1953, 1955 or 1957?
- [14] Name the type of theatre show popular in the UK at Christmas time
- [15] Christmas carolling began in which European Country?
  
- [16] Which monarch made the first Christmas radio broadcast?
- [17] The Russian Orthodox Church celebrates Christmas on what date?
- [18] How many ghosts appear in Dickens' novel "A Christmas Carol"?
- [19] The song "Walking in the Air" is from which animated film?
- [20] In which Christmas carol is everything calm and bright?
  
- [21] Name the first Christmas song broadcast from space in 1965
- [22] TV presenter Noel Edmonds was born on which December day?
- [23] What did "my true love" send to me on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of Christmas?
- [24] Which very bright star rises in the east around midnight at Christmas?
- [25] Which best-selling festive song is associated with Bing Crosby?

Answers on page 11

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I asked the lady in Greggs if they had anything without fat or sugar.  
"Yes", she said, "we have napkins".

A little boy asked his older sister why he had a belly-button.  
"That's where Mummy plugged you in to charge your battery when you first arrived"

## What's on at Prudhoe Methodist Church

**Bairns & Brews: Every Thursday in term-time 10:00 – 11:30am**

**Coffee morning: Wednesday 17 November 10:00 – 11:15am**

**Christmas Coffee and more: Friday 10 December 10:00am – 12 noon**

**Carol Service: Sunday 19 December 10am**

**Christmas Morning Service: 25 December 10:00am**

No service Christmas Eve

**Boxing Day: Filmed online service (Sun 26<sup>th</sup> December)**

### Church Family news - BAPTISMS

21 November at 2pm: Ellen, daughter of Amelia (nee McKie) and Alan.

5 December at 2pm: Harry, great grandson of Bill and Ann Worthy.

**HOLIDAY CLUB 27-29 October** Thanks to all who helped, and all who sponsored a child. We have had the pleasure of interacting with over 70 individual children. (30 5-7 year olds, 26 8-10 year olds, 5 Apprentice leaders, 2 Teenage Tech geniuses and at least 9 at the Pre-School Drop-In). Not only did these young people have fun learning about Jesus but the enthusiastic volunteers from churches in Prudhoe and Stocksfield worked together as a strong and dedicated team to make it such a success.

### CHRISTMAS

#### - a poem by Julie Woodford

If Jesus was born on this earth today  
how different His birth would be  
Would they paste it up on a Facebook  
page for all the world to see?

Would the wise men of business  
bring investments and shares  
To increase His wealth like gold?  
Would designer clothes and the latest  
new phone be given to this child to hold?

If Jesus was born on the earth today  
would it be in a refugee camp?  
Surrounded by hate and by fighting and  
fear; in a tent that is cold and damp?

Would terrorists plot to kill this child  
not caring who else was killed?  
As Herod had done in days gone by,  
when the laughter of children was stilled.

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Jesus is here on the earth today  
Every day He is here among men.  
In the hearts of His followers here on earth  
He weeps for the suffering and pain.

He works in the camps, in the hearts of  
those who show peace in the face of war  
He works in the prayers of the people  
who love, and give of themselves more  
and more.

Lord, we cry for the world and the people  
we love,  
Lord forgive us our hatred and pride,  
Lord, come down by your Spirit and work  
in our hearts,  
Lord, come near and stand by our side.

Lord, heal all the terror and hatred and  
fear,  
Lord, we've let You down badly so far,  
Lord, remind us once more at this time of  
your birth  
Of the peace loving Saviour You are.



## Christmas Quiz answers

- [1] Donkey [2] C19th (1843) [3] Gabriel  
[4] Isaac Newton [5] Nordmann Fir  
[6] St Stephen [7] Candy canes  
[8] Pigs in blankets [9] Germany  
[10] Angel or a star [11] Elf on the Shelf  
[12] Christmas crackers [13] 1957  
[14] Pantomime [15] Austria  
[16] George V in 1932 [17] 7<sup>th</sup> January  
[18] 4 (with Marley's) [19] The Snowman  
[20] Silent Night [21] Jingle Bells  
[22] 22<sup>nd</sup> December (same as Q number!)  
[23] 7 swans a swimming [24] Sinus  
[25] White Christmas

## Santa goes green! - an interMISSION exclusive



Santa will now use his magic key even if your house does have a chimney



He said "this will reduce my carbon footprint"



## OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES ...

A teacher was observing her classroom of children while they were drawing. She would occasionally walk around to see each child's work. As she got to one little girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was.

The girl replied, 'I'm drawing God.'

The teacher paused and said, 'But no one knows what God looks like.'

Without missing a beat, or looking up from her drawing, the girl replied, 'They will in a minute.'

## OUR (inter) MISSION STATEMENT

[1] To inform our local community, and ourselves, of what happens within the walls of PMC (as a building)

[2] To inform the same parties of our organised outreach work beyond those walls (eg Open-the-Book)

[3] To inform about individual work and witness by our members working with the Holy Spirit

[4] To outreach our fellowship to those unable or (perhaps) unwilling to worship with us.

[5] To spread the Good News using a fresh theme each month.

[6] Making disciples.

Rev Rob Hawkins

**PUBLICATION.** We aim to distribute new issues by the first Sunday of the month.

Please send articles no later than the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the previous month to:

**intermission@uwclub.net**

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www.prudhoemc.org

EVERY ONE IS SOMEONE'S FAVOURITE!



Christmas Carols – the healthy alternative to crunchy caramels – why not enjoy one today?