



The
United
Reformed
Church



Halifax Group Magazine

Heath New Hope New Providence



Dec/Jan 2020

Our vision is to know, love, live and
share Jesus, for a better world.

Letter from the New Manse

Dear Friends

Christmas is coming! The decorations are up in town and the piped music in the shops has a seasonal theme to it. There's an air of anticipation: people are looking forward to Christmas.

For many years before the birth of Jesus there was a great sense of anticipation. His coming had been foretold by the prophets: a virgin would give birth, in a town called Bethlehem, and her son would be called, "Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." God had promised and the people waited with expectation.

There must surely have been anticipation in the household of a young couple called Mary and Joseph. Their lives and plans had been turned upside down by the visit of an angel and both knew that the child Mary was carrying was very special.

At the appointed time, Jesus was born, and every year we remember this most significant moment in history. It's right that we should recall the events surrounding his birth, take time to mentally visit the stable and pause to experience the miracle of Christmas. We have good reason to rejoice and celebrate, and we look forward to Christmas with anticipation.

The question is, does Jesus, the one whose birth we celebrate, match our expectations?

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He wasn't what the so-called wise men were expecting. This baby king wasn't found in the royal palace, but "in the squalour of a borrowed stable" as one modern song puts it.

He wasn't what the religious leaders of the time were expecting. They'd been looking forward to the coming of someone who would set their land and people free from Roman occupation, but instead they heard him challenge their ideas and practices.

And what about us? Is he what we expect? This baby is the Son of God, the eternal Word, present throughout the whole of history from before the world began and for all eternity. Thinking of these things will surely bring us to our knees in adoration, but true worship means putting him at the centre of our lives. I wonder if we can cope with this.

The Christmas story tells of God becoming a vulnerable human whose bed was a manger, but his vulnerability lasted much longer than infancy and childhood. In maturity Jesus made himself vulnerable by touching lepers, associating with those who were despised by others, challenging the religious elite and going to the cross. Following him, with him at the centre of our lives, we must allow ourselves to become vulnerable too: to allow him to touch our lives, and to reach out in love to others in places and situations where we're well out of our comfort zone.

As we remember his birth it's easy to forget that this baby is

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the one who now challenges to go beyond our natural human responses by loving our enemies, turning the other cheek and forgiving unconditionally.

Is he what we expected? Perhaps not: but this is the Jesus whose birth we'll celebrate, and whom we're called to worship and to follow, every day, not just at Christmas.

Martin joins me in wishing you a Christmas filled with peace and joy, and a happy new year.

Love, Heather



Pulpit list

Heath URC, Free School Lane. 10.30am

December/January

December

- 1 Rev Daphne Hull – Parade and Toy Service
- 8 Mrs Dawn Walker
- 15 Rev Heather Pollard – Communion
- 15 6.00pm – Candlelight Carol Service
- 22 Rev John Jenkinson
- 24 4.00pm - Christmas Eve Service at New Hope
- 25 10.30am – Christmas Day Service – Rev Heather Pollard
- 29 10.30am – Group Service at Heath

January

- 5 Rev John Jenkinson
- 12 Mrs Dawn Walker
- 19 Rev Heather Pollard – Communion
- 26 Mr Jim Walker – Fair Trade Stall

Activities in December & January

Sunday 15 December – 4.00pm – Messy Church

Monday 16 December – 7.30pm – Thursday Club-
Halifax Symphony Orchestra Christmas Concert £6

Tuesday 17 December – Community Coffee Morning

THURSDAY 19 DECEMBER – 6-7pm CAROLS AT
TESCO EXPRESS (Churches Together)

Thursday 9 January–7.30pm–Thursday Club New Year
Party

Sunday 12 January – 4.00pm – Messy Church

Thursday 16 January – 10.00am Elders Meeting

Tuesday 21 January – Community Coffee Morning

SOUTH HALIFAX CHURCHES TOGETHER WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

Each service at noon with a soup lunch

Tuesday 21 Jan - Heath and St Judes at St Judes

Thursday 23 Jan - All Saints and St Albans at All Saints

Friday 24 Jan- St Marks and St Andrews at St Andrews

Anyone can attend any or all meetings.

Weekly Events

Regular Activities at Heath

Sunday

4.00pm Messy Church (monthly Sept-June)

Monday

9.15am Toddler Club (Term time only)

5.30pm Beaver Scouts 6-8yrs

6.30pm Cub Scouts 8-10yrs

Tuesday

10.30am Community Coffee Club (3rd Tuesday in month)

Thursday

7.30pm Thursday Club- Social Group (2nd Thursday in month Sept – June)

Friday

7.30pm Scouts 10-14yrs

7.30pm Explorer Scouts 14-18 yrs

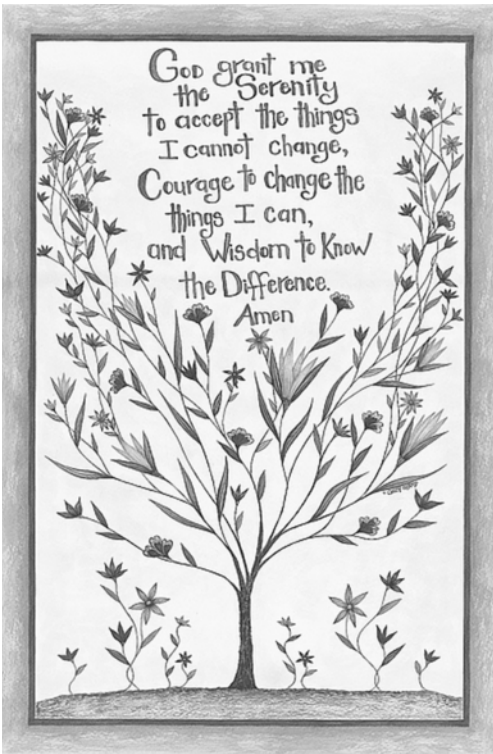
We recently were given this at church and thought it might be worth sharing

Ways to reduce Carbon Emissions

Buy local in-season produce and buy it loose/bulk
Set your thermometer lower and wear warm clothing
Drink tap water – not bottled water
Walk more, drive less and combine trips
Take less fuel-thirsty holidays
In future buy a hybrid or better, an electric car
Turn off lights & save on standby lights
Take shorter showers and only boil what you need
Wash clothes at low temperatures & use drier less
Use low energy bulbs and radiator thermostats
Draught-proof whenever you can
Drive at optimum speed for economy
'Grow your own', do compost and plant



Hello folks
How are you doing?



Christmas will soon be here, then come and go as the season changes. John 1:14 "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." As the nights draw in and the weather, let us look proactively of how we can spend these winter days and nights, being ready for spring. One way possibly, is always having something creative on the go: woodwork, collage/ painting/ needlework or knitting. Writing or thinking up an article/ memoirs or a daily devotional (eg.....

<https://www.ucb.co.uk/word>

[-for-today](#)). Cooking and having family or a friend around to enjoy it. Exercise indoors. Making lists for the spring; of jobs to do or plan that holiday. Taking a college course. The possibilities are endless and sometimes we also need a little motivation. Sometimes I have to give myself a pep talk, do you? Once a tutor of mine said, "Just get started". I say those words to myself to be motivated. Once I've started, the rest follows. So let's also inspire each other and just get started with what we **can** do.

At Christmas many look to Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world in the words of a familiar hymn

“The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight” 1868 by Phillips Brooks.

And the words below of a familiar saying attributed to Reinhold Niebuhr complement this hymn well:

If you feel you struggle this time of year the NHS have an online action plan – search- “every mind matters” with practical tips, apps and resources, expert advice, connections to local services and activities, helplines and charities. And please don’t hesitate to give me a call.

And finally for now: 3 John 1:2 “So dear friends, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well”.

With many blessings and please don’t hesitate to call me: 07803295002. Please leave a message and I will get back to you. Thank you.

Dawn Weald, Parish Nurse, Heath Church.

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Bugs Bunny was shopping at the supermarket and a sales assistant said to him: “If you can tell me what 19,866 times 10,543 is, we’ll give you free carrots for life.”

Immediately, Bugs responded: “209,447,238”.

The sales assistant was astonished and asked: “How on earth did you do that?”

Bugs replied: “If there’s one thing rabbits are good at, it’s multiplying.”

**Pulpit Supply**

**December/January 2020**

Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> Rev John Jenkinson

Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> Rev Heather Pollard

Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> Mr. Alan Jowett (Carol Service)

Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup> Mrs. Juliet Foster

Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> Rev Heather Pollard (Group Service 4.00pm.)

Dec. 29<sup>th</sup> Mrs Juliet Foster

Jan. 5<sup>th</sup> Mr. Alan Jowett

Jan. 12<sup>th</sup> Mrs. Juliet Foster

Jan. 19<sup>th</sup> Mr. Martin Pollard

Jan. 26<sup>th</sup> Mr. Rev John Jenkinson

**December/January Diary**

Sun. Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> Church Meeting after morning service.

**Mondays** Art Group held on Monday afternoons 1.30 until 4.00pm - Anyone wanting to spend a relaxing afternoon is most welcome to join us - Norma Boys Brigade 6-30 p.m. Anchors, Juniors and Seniors (contact 832607)

**Tuesdays** Walking Group meet bottom of Court Lane 9-30 a.m. contact 357739 if you intend to go.

**Wednesdays** Friendship Hour 2-15 p.m. (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>

Wednesdays) 11<sup>th</sup> December Will be our Christmas Party  
**All Welcome**, 8<sup>th</sup> January will be Alan Jowett and on 22<sup>nd</sup>  
January it will be Denise Adlard the subject "you and your  
mattress"

Every Wednesday Ladies' Keep Fit 7-30 p.m.

**Thursdays** African Church Worship 5-30 p.m. to 7-30  
p.m.

KUMON Educational Classes for Children Wednesdays  
4 p.m. to 6 p.m. and Sundays from 4 p.m.

**Saturdays** Maths Group 9-30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

**Still Before Christmas** a service of preparation for  
Christmas. This year it will be held on **Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup>  
December** at Pellon Baptist Church and will be led by our  
minister Heather. Drinks/Biscuits available from 7 p.m.,  
service starts 7-30pm.

Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> December Carol Singing at ASDA 7 p.m. to  
8 p.m.

Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> December "**Carols in the Park**" this is a  
community event organised by Tony King who has eve-  
rything in hand and it will start at 6 p.m. Wrap up warm  
and bring a torch to read the carol sheet!

**Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** - a united service on  
Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> January at **St. Columba's at 4 p.m.**  
followed by a "bring & share meal".

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January service at Highgate Methodist  
church at 2-30 p.m.

New Hope Carol Service 15<sup>th</sup> December arranged by  
Alan Jowett

**Christmas Eve** Group Service at New Hope 4 p.m. led by Heather

**Christmas Day services** 9-30 am at New Providence.  
10-30am at Heath. Heather will lead both of these services.

**Averil & Alan** are holding their usual New Year's Eve Party 7-30 p.m. onwards all are welcome. There will be a Charity Box (for Malawi) for any who wish to contribute.

### **Christmas Tree legends**

It seems to be generally recognised that the people who lived in what is now called Germany were the first to develop the tradition of the Christmas tree.

Many legends exist about its origins. One is the story of Saint Boniface, an English monk who organised the Christian Church in France and Germany.

One day travelling through Germany, he came upon a group of pagans gathered around a great oak tree about to sacrifice a child to their god. In anger and to stop the sacrifice and save the child's life, Boniface felled the tree with one mighty blow of his fist. In its place grew a small fir tree. The Saint told the pagan worshippers that the tiny fir tree was the Tree of Life and stood for the eternal life of Christ.

### **The Christmas Tree Across the World**

Early Christmas trees, harking back to pre Christian times, had figures of fairies - the good spirits - while horns and bells were placed on it to frighten off evil spirits. In Poland Christmas trees were always decorated with angels, peacocks and other birds as well as many stars. In Sweden, trees are decorated with brightly painted wooden

ornaments and straw figures of animals and children. In Denmark, tiny Danish flags, along with mobiles of bells, stars, snowflakes and hearts are hung on Christmas trees.

Japanese

Christians prefer tiny fans and paper lanterns. Lithuanians cover their trees with straw bird cages, stars and geometric shapes. The straw sends a wish for good crops in the coming year. In the Czech Republic trees display ornaments made from painted egg shells. In the Ukraine every Christmas tree has a spider and web for good luck. Legend has it that a poor woman with nothing to put on her children's tree woke on Christmas morning to find the branches covered with spider webs turned to silver by the rising sun. In Britain, the custom of a decorated Christmas tree appears to have started in the early nineteenth century, when Albert, the Prince Consort to Queen Victoria brought the tradition from his homeland of Saxe-Coburg, now part of Germany. The example set by royalty became a general fashion.

Giving Thanks - the story is told of the grandmother who every Christmas sent her grandchildren a large cheque but she never received so much of a thank you, despite the urging of their respective parents. But one year things changed and the next day all the grandchildren came over to thank her. She was telling this to a friend who said, "How wonderful! What do you think caused them to become so polite?" "Oh", said the grandmother, "it was easy. This year I didn't sign the cheques!"

The minister of a city church enjoyed a drink now and then and his passion was for peach brandy. One of his congregation gave him a bottle every Christmas. This particular year his friend, Joe, said to him I want you to thank me from the pulpit for the peach brandy. The minister said he would and the next Sunday, he remembered the promise he had made and wondered how he could do it. Joe sat in the front row with a grin on his face waiting to see the minister's embarrassment. The minister climbed into the pulpit and said, "before I begin I have an announcement. I would very much like to thank my friend, Joe, for his kind gift of peaches, - and for the spirit in which they were given."

Good King Wenceslas rings up a local pizza restaurant to order a pizza. "Certainly your Majesty," says the manager, "will it be your usual? Deep pan, crisp and even?"

### **A Christmas Prayer by Robert Louise Stevenson**

Loving Father, help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and worship of the wise men. Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings and teach us to be merry with clear hearts. May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven for Jesus' sake.

Amen

## **RHYMING RHETORIC FOR PANTOMIME EPIC**

Another exciting installment of the Game Show to beat all Game Shows.

We have all been primed by the Game Show Hosts (Snakes in suits) with their particular brand of snake oil, which is guaranteed to cure anything, even a world wide slump.

We can go it alone, against all the odds, selling to countries who don't want stuff because they can make their own.

What are the Game Show Hosts planning to make you push their button? Perhaps a special Christmas present we can't resist (free TV licences again) or, an end to elections. Then the Quiz Masters would have won, which is the ulterior motive?

You can be excused for thinking "Why am I reading this rubbish?" but just study the 1920's and 1930's, scary stuff!

The writer hates to think about Christmas being hijacked by politics, but they would make a good pantomime dames! Magic beans come to mind.

But be ready for the rhyming rhetoric to brighten up the dark days leading up to the big vote. It brings to mind turkeys voting for Christmas but not knowing anything about Christmas.

### Pulpit Supply

#### **DECEMBER**

1<sup>st</sup> ....Mrs. Juliet Foster

8<sup>th</sup>....Mr. Ken Lees-Wolfenden (Communion)

15<sup>th</sup>....Boy's Brigade (Parade)

22<sup>nd</sup>...Rev. Heather Pollard

25<sup>th</sup> ...Rev. Heather Pollard (Joint Service with New Hope) at 9.30am

#### **JANUARY**

5<sup>th</sup>... Mrs. Juliet Foster

12<sup>th</sup>... Rev. Heather Pollard (Communion)

19<sup>th</sup>... Sue L.W. (Parade)

26<sup>th</sup>... Mr. John Brooksbank

### **Diary**

#### **DECEMBER**

Wednesday's – 1.00pm I'm Fine Depression Group

Friday's – 6.45pm Boy's Brigade / Girl's Association at the Carlton Centre

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> – 12 for 12.30pm Christmas Lunch at Windmill Court

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> – 12.30pm Christmas Lunch in Church

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> – 7.30pm New Provi Circle



## **JANUARY**

Wednesday's – 1.00pm I'm Fine Depression Group

Friday's – 6.45pm Boy's Brigade / Girl's Association at the Carlton Centre

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> – 7.30pm Secretary/Treasurer's Meeting

Monday 27<sup>th</sup> – 7.30pm New Provi Circle

## **CAROL SINGING**

On Saturday December 14<sup>th</sup> New Providence will be joining Churches Together in North Halifax from 11.00am to 12.00 midday, to sing carols in Morrison's Supermarket to raise money for the homeless.

## **CHRISTMAS LUNCHES**

This year there will again be two Christmas lunches for the church to enjoy!

We have booked at Windmill Court, Ogden on Monday December 9<sup>th</sup>, 12 00 for 12.30 pm. The cost will be £18.95 for 3 courses plus coffee and mince pies. Please give your name to Sue, with your menu choices and money.

Following the Service on Sunday December 22<sup>nd</sup> there will be our Christmas Buffet Lunch at Church, price £8.00 per person. It would be helpful if you could let Sue know if you intend to be there.

# NEW PROVIDENCE

The Boy's Brigade    Halifax Battalion    4<sup>th</sup> Halifax

Boy's Brigade and Girls Association

Weekend Indoor Camp

The weekend of September 20<sup>th</sup> 2019 saw us setting off for our annual Company Camp. As for the past 30 years we were off to Kirkham which is near Lytham St Annes. This is a site owned by The Boy's Brigade in the North West and we stay here in indoor accommodation as in The Boys' Brigade our younger members aren't allowed to camp under canvas.

The site contains two buildings one housing 46 and the other 16 both with cooking facilities. There is a field which can be used for camping, football and other games, a sports hall and an assault course.

Friday night is settling in night and can be quite amusing watching the youngsters trying to put a quilt cover on a duvet.

Having said that some of our male staff are even worse!!!!

The youngsters then went up to the sports hall until supper time and then to bed about midnight.

## **NEW PROVIDENCE**

On Saturday we woke to a glorious day weather wise and it saw us setting off for the seaside where our younger lot spent the morning, some of them along with Mr. Kershaw even walked down and found the sea – quite an event on that coast. Our older ones spent their morning on the Pitch and Putt course where the idea is to beat Mr.

Rawnsley but unfortunately they failed this year. We then amused the people walking on the front by feeding five thousand or so it seemed. After lunch we went swimming. We had an inflatable put into the pool and it was everyone seemed to enjoy that. By this time it was late

afternoon so we returned to Kirkham and the youngsters played out on the field till teatime. After being fed and watered the girls and boys were off to the sports hall leaving some of us older folk wondering where they get their energy.

We woke on Sunday morning to an absolutely awful day weather wise. It rained more or less all the time so it was quite a contrast to the day before. We went ten pin bowling in the morning once again the aim was to beat Mr. Rawnsley and this time they were successful. We came back to Kirkham and had lunch, this was followed by our Sunday Service taken by Mr. Rawnsley. Then it was off to the sports hall yet again as the weather had put a stop to our usual rounders competition.

So all in all it was a busy weekend and of course it would not be possible to do this had it not been for all the staff

## **NEW PROVIDENCE**

who give up their weekend to take the young people away and pay for the privilege of doing so. It must be something the youngsters like and remember as we have two of our younger officers who have moved away now but still keep in touch with us and come to Kirkham each year one of them driving up from Bournemouth.

I am most grateful to our ladies Mrs. Hall, Mrs. Kershaw and Mrs. Horsfall for doing most of the cooking and Mr. Whitley for being our QM. I must also thank our other members of staff for all the work they do in the sports hall and field making sure our young people keep safe.

The last but by no means the least, thank you we must say is to the Trustees of the Sion Day School Trust for their very generous donation which paid for us to go swimming and ten pin bowling.

I did suggest a few years ago that we look for a different venue

for this event but no one seemed keen. In fact they don't even want to change the menu. So perhaps re-inventing the wheel is not such a good idea, well at least for our group.

We booked for next year before we left Kirkham!!!!

Janet

Company Captain

# **A Christmas reunion - a true story from Brooklyn USA**

By Pastor Rob Reid

The brand new pastor and his wife, newly assigned to their first ministry to reopen a church in suburban Brooklyn, arrived in early October excited about their opportunities. When they saw their church, it was very run down and needed much work. They set a goal to have everything done in time to have their first service on Christmas Eve.

They worked hard, repairing pews, plastering walls, painting, etc., and on December 18th they were ahead of schedule and just about finished. On December 19th a terrible tempest - a driving rainstorm - hit the area and lasted for two days. On the 21st, the pastor went over to the church. His heart sank when he saw that the roof had leaked, causing a large area of plaster about 20 feet by 8 feet to fall off the front wall of the sanctuary just behind the pulpit, beginning about head high.

The pastor cleaned up the mess on the floor, and not knowing what else to do but postpone the Christmas Eve service, headed home. On the way he noticed that a local business was having a flea market type sale for charity so he stepped in. One of the items was a beautiful, handmade, ivory coloured, crocheted tablecloth with exquisite work, fine colours and a Cross embroidered right in the centre. It was just the right size to cover up the hole in the front wall. He bought it and headed back to the church.

By this time it had started to snow. An older woman running from the opposite direction was trying to catch the bus. She missed it. The pastor invited her to wait in the warm church for the next bus 45 minutes later. She sat in a pew and paid no attention to the pastor while he got a ladder, hangers, etc., to put up the tablecloth as a wall tapestry. The pastor could hardly believe how beautiful it looked and it covered up the entire problem area.

Then he noticed the woman walking down the centre aisle. Her face was like a sheet. "Pastor," she asked, "where did you get that tablecloth?"

The pastor explained. The woman asked him to check the lower right corner to see if the initials, EBG were crocheted into it there. They were. These were the initials of the woman, and she had made this tablecloth 35 years before, in Austria.

The woman could hardly believe it as the pastor told how he had just got the Tablecloth. The woman explained that before the war she and her husband were well-to-do people in Austria. When the Nazis came, she was forced to leave. Her husband was going to follow her the next week. She was captured, sent to prison and never saw her husband or her home again. The pastor wanted to give her the tablecloth; but she made the pastor keep it for the church. The pastor insisted on driving her home, which was the least he could do. She lived on the other side of Staten Island and was only in Brooklyn for the day for a housecleaning job.

What a wonderful service they had on Christmas Eve. The church was almost full. The music and the spirit were great. At the end of the service, the pastor and his wife greeted everyone at the door and many said that they would return.

One older man, whom the pastor recognized from the neighbourhood, continued to sit in one of the pews and stare, and the pastor wondered why he wasn't leaving. The man asked him where he got the tablecloth on the front wall because it was identical to one that his wife had made years ago when they lived in Austria before the war and how could there be two tablecloths so much alike? He told the pastor how the Nazis came, how he forced his wife to flee for her safety, and he was supposed to follow her, but he was arrested and put in a prison. He never saw his wife or his home again all the 35 years in between.

The pastor asked him if he would allow him to take him for a little ride. They drove to Staten Island and to the same house where the pastor had taken the woman three days earlier. He helped the man climb the three flights of stairs to the woman's apartment, knocked on the door and he saw the greatest Christmas reunion he could ever imagine.



## Praying For Gifts

Two young boys were spending the night at their grandparents the week before Christmas. At bedtime, the two boys knelt beside their beds to say their prayers when the youngest one began praying at the top of his lungs.

"I PRAY FOR A NEW BICYCLE

"I PRAY FOR A NEW NINTENDO

"I PRAY FOR A NEW PHONE "

His older brother leaned over and nudged the younger brother and said, "Why are you shouting your prayers? God isn't deaf. "

To which the little brother replied, "No, but Grandma is!"

A guy bought his wife a beautiful diamond ring for Christmas. After hearing about this extravagant gift, a friend of his said, "I thought she wanted one of those sporty four-wheel-drive vehicles. "She did," he replied. "But where was I going to find a fake Jeep?"

It was Christmas Eve and, while at the meat counter, a woman was anxiously picking over the last few remaining turkeys in the hope of finding a large one.

In desperation she called over a shop assistant and asked, "Excuse me. Do these turkeys get any bigger?"

"No, madam," he replied... "they're all dead."

One Christmas, Joe and Peter built a skating rink in the middle of a field. A shepherd leading his flock decided to take a shortcut across the rink. The sheep, however, were afraid of the ice and wouldn't cross it. Desperate, the shepherd began tugging them to the other side.

"Look at that," remarked Peter to Joe, "That guy is trying to pull the wool over our ice!"



**This will blow yer mind away ... just try it  
and see.**

**All the people in the world are of  
the same age this year!**

**It's amazing: this year all the  
people in the world are all in the  
same age group, all equal to 2019.**

**This year is special. It happens  
only once every 1,000 years. This  
year your age + your year of birth,  
each individual is = 2019. For  
example, you are 55 years old and  
you were born in 1964, which adds  
up to 2019. Very strange, even the  
Chinese and foreign masters can  
not explain. Please calculate and  
see if the answer is 2019. It's a  
thousand-year wait! Good shot!  
Go to the circle of friends, let  
everybody calculate it!**



## **Saint Stephen**

Saint Stephen was one of the first deacons of the Christian Church. He was the first Christian martyr. Stephen is believed to have been a Greek Jew who converted to Christianity. When the number of disciples increased, there was much confusion over the distribution of alms and the serving of the poor. Stephen's trustworthy character marked him out, and he was chosen as one of the seven deacons who would perform this task. An excellent and well trusted orator, his preaching style was so effective that many Jews became worried about his success. They accused him of blasphemy and he was made to stand trial.

### **Trial and death by stoning**

At the supreme Jewish law court, the Sanhedrin, Stephen recounted the many mercies that God had given the children of Israel, and the ungrateful way in which they had repaid Him. He accused them of murdering Jesus, whose coming, he said, had been foretold by Moses. This angered the crowd and he was dragged out onto the streets. He was then stoned to death according to the law at that time, an event witnessed by St Paul. It is believed he died around the year 34AD. He is believed to have been initially buried in a grave to the north of Jerusalem, but this body was exhumed and moved to a new grave outside the Damascus Gate. This is where the stoning is believed to have taken place.

Stephen is the patron saint of deacons, headaches, horses, coffin makers, and masons. He is often represented carrying a pile of rocks or with rocks on his head. St Stephen's Day is 26th December and it is name checked in the Christmas carol Good King Wenceslas.

## ***THE MARKET SQUARE***

The beasts of burden all lined up across the market  
square:

A horse, an ass, a camel and an elephant were there.

But when some wealthy buyers came into the  
creatures' view

They kicked the little donkey to the far end of the  
queue.

A rajah bought the elephant and shipped it to Bombay.

He rode it to the temple where he worshipped every  
day.

Great ropes of jewels hung from it almost touched the  
track;

Such great weight would have broken any little  
donkey's back.

The horse was bought for Caesar and was taken back  
to Rome

To live in marble stable and be groomed with golden  
comb.

It led the victory parades, won every chariot race;  
An ordinary donkey could have never stood the pace.

A wealthy sheik the camel bought and after it was sold

He purchased velvet saddle cloths, all trimmed with  
pure gold.

It ran for miles o'er desert sand, no stops for food or  
drink,

In places where a donkey's legs up to the top would  
sink.

As darkness fell a man appeared, he spoke as though  
in fright:

"I want to buy a donkey and I must have one tonight.  
I'm going on a journey with a baby and my wife.

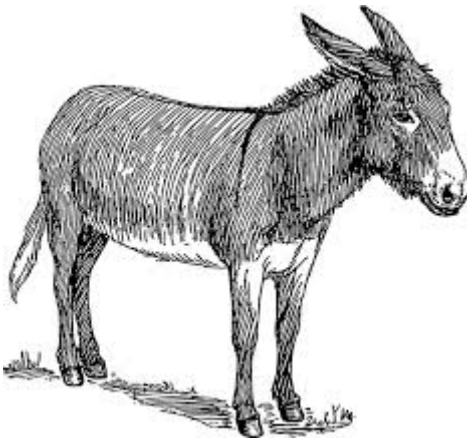
A good sure-footed donkey could just save the infant's  
life."

When rajahs, sheiks and emperors require another  
steed,

A shaggy little donkey is the last thing that they  
need.,

While other beasts bore heads of state all dressed  
in silk and rings,

In swaddling clothes, upon an ass, there rode the  
King of Kings.



# Norma's Wordsearch

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P | E | S | M | E | H | E | L | H | T | E | B | A |
| G | C | U | C | A | N | D | L | E | D | E | I | G |
| I | C | S | O | O | H | P | E | S | O | J | R | D |
| F | H | E | T | I | H | W | S | A | N | W | T | I |
| T | R | J | L | L | L | T | L | N | K | S | H | S |
| S | I | T | O | E | N | A | E | T | E | T | L | Y |
| D | S | L | A | E | B | N | G | A | Y | H | W | T |
| R | T | D | V | A | H | R | N | R | B | G | I | R |
| E | M | D | A | Y | E | P | A | P | A | I | S | A |
| H | A | Y | L | E | N | M | E | T | B | L | E | P |
| P | S | L | R | C | A | R | O | L | I | W | M | E |
| E | O | T | I | N | S | E | L | V | N | O | E | E |
| H | S | T | A | B | L | E | Y | Y | N | E | N | H |
| S | N | O | W | R | E | G | N | A | M | A | R | S |

Advent  
Birth  
Bethlehem  
Mary  
Joseph  
Baby  
Jesus  
Donkey

Inn  
Stable  
Manger  
Shepherds  
Sheep  
Star  
Angels  
Wisemen

Christmas  
Carol  
Gifts  
Lights  
Holly  
Ivy  
White  
Snow

Celebrations  
Santa  
Partys  
Tree  
Tinsel  
Candle

When all the words have been found work out the message with the left over letters

## **Crossword Clues**

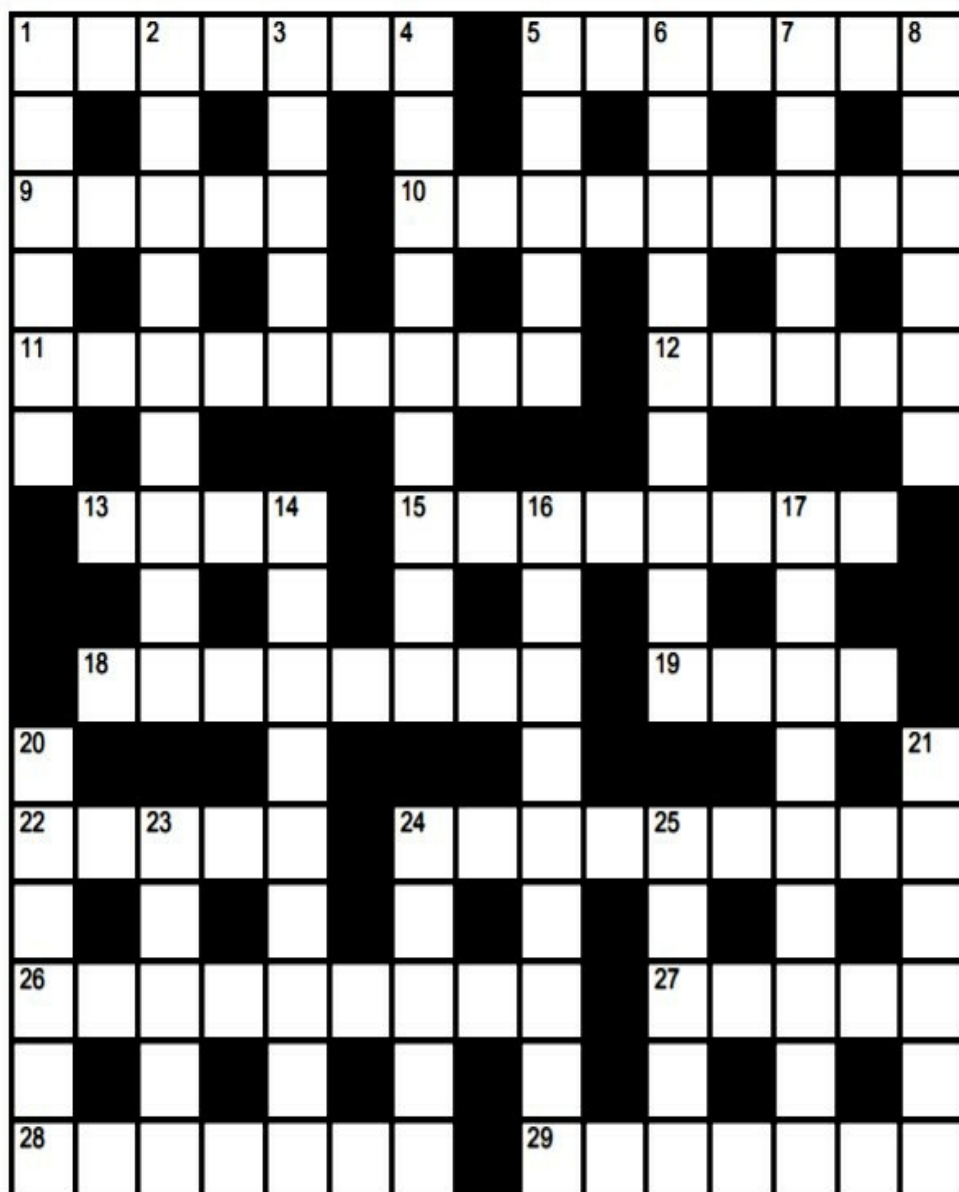
### Across

- 1 Wife of Isaac (7)
- 5 Resplendencies (7)
- 9 Stories (5)
- 10 Judges, elders, tax collectors, for example (9)
- 11 Catastrophies (9)
- 12 Father of Ahiam (5)
- 13 Hades (4)
- 15 Eunuch from here was baptised by Philip (8)
- 18 A sound of joy (8)
- 19 Vessel (4)
- 22 Up on high (5)
- 24 First meal of the day (9)
- 26 Hard (9)
- 27 Solomon made a throne out of this (5)
- 28 Furious (7)
- 29 Decorated (7)

### Down

- 1 Repair (6)
- 2 David committed adultery with her (9)
- 3 Barrels (5)
- 4 Propitiation (9)
- 5 Jesus was given three as a child (5)
- 6 Times (9)
- 7 Father of Esau and Jacob (5)
- 8 Killed by Jael (6)
- 14 Heavenly flash (9)
- 16 Reaped (9)
- 17 Copycats (9)
- 20 Horse rider's seat (6)
- 21 Remained (6)
- 23 Tender (5)
- 24 Tied (5)
- 25 Abraham was going to kill his son with this (5)

# CROSSWORD



Find the twelve differences between the two pictures





## GROUP CALENDAR

| <u>Date</u>                    | <u>Time</u>                  | <u>Place</u>          | <u>What's on</u>              |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b><u>December/January</u></b> |                              |                       |                               |
| <b>Sun. 8<sup>th</sup></b>     | <i>after morning service</i> | <i>New hope</i>       | <i>Church Meeting</i>         |
| <b>Mon. 9<sup>th</sup></b>     | <i>12.00pm</i>               | <i>New Providence</i> | <i>Christmas lunch</i>        |
| <b>Wed 11<sup>th</sup></b>     | <i>2.15pm</i>                | <i>New Hope</i>       | <i>Friendship Hour</i>        |
| <b>Sun. 15<sup>th</sup></b>    | <i>4.00pm</i>                | <i>Heath</i>          | <i>Messy Church</i>           |
| <b>Tue. 17<sup>th</sup></b>    | <i>10.30am</i>               | <i>Heath</i>          | <i>community coffee morn</i>  |
| <b>Sun. 22<sup>nd</sup></b>    | <i>12.30pm</i>               | <i>New Providence</i> | <i>Christmas lunch</i>        |
| <b>Mon. 23<sup>rd</sup></b>    | <i>7.30pm</i>                | <i>New Providence</i> | <i>New Provi Circle</i>       |
| <b><u>January 2020</u></b>     |                              |                       |                               |
| <b>Wed. 8<sup>th</sup></b>     | <i>2.15pm</i>                | <i>New Hope</i>       | <i>Friendship Hour</i>        |
| <b>Thu. 9<sup>th</sup></b>     | <i>7.30pm</i>                | <i>Heath</i>          | <i>Thursday Club</i>          |
| <b>Sun. 12<sup>th</sup></b>    | <i>4.00pm</i>                | <i>Heath</i>          | <i>Messy Church</i>           |
| <b>Wed 15<sup>th</sup></b>     | <i>7.30pm</i>                | <i>New Providence</i> | <i>Sec/Treasurers meeting</i> |
| <b>Thu. 16<sup>th</sup></b>    | <i>10.00am</i>               | <i>Heath</i>          | <i>Elders Meeting</i>         |
| <b>Tue. 21<sup>st</sup></b>    | <i>10.30am</i>               | <i>Heath</i>          | <i>community coffee morn</i>  |
| <b>Wed 22<sup>nd</sup></b>     | <i>2.15pm</i>                | <i>New Hope</i>       | <i>Friendship Hour</i>        |
| <b>Mon. 27<sup>th</sup></b>    | <i>7.30pm</i>                | <i>New Providence</i> | <i>New Provi Circle</i>       |

### Crossword Answers

**Across:** 1 Rebecca, 5 Glories, 9 Myths, 10 Officials, 11 Disasters, 12 Sacar, 13 Hell, 15 Ethiopia, 18 Laughter, 19 Ship, 22 Aloft, 24 Breakfast, 26 Difficult, 27 Ivory, 28 Enraged, 29 Dressed.

**Down:** 1 Remedy, 2 Bathsheba, 3 Casks, 4 Atonement, 5 Gifts, 6 Occasions, 7 Isaac, 8 Sisera, 14 Lightning, 16 Harvested, 17 Imitators, 20 Saddle, 21 Stayed, 23 Offer, 24 Bound, 25 Knife.

### Norma's Wordsearch Answer,

This months message is:-

Peace, goodwill to all and a happy new year  
From Norma

## **PREACHER PLAN**

### **HEATH URC, MANOR DRIVE, 10.30 AM**

Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> Rev Daphne Hull  
Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> Mrs. Dawn Walker  
Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> Rev Heather Pollard  
Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> Candlelight Service 6.00pm  
Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup> Rev John Jenkinson  
Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> Rev Heather Pollard 10.30am  
Dec. 29<sup>th</sup> Group Service at Heath

### **NEW HOPE URC, WARLEY ROAD 10.30 AM**

Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> Rev John Jenkinson  
Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> Rev Heather Pollard  
Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> Mr. Alan Jowett  
Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup> Mrs. Juliet Foster  
Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> Rev Heather Pollard (Group Service 4.00pm.)  
Dec. 29<sup>th</sup> Mrs Juliet Foster

### **NEW PROVIDENCE URC, KEIGHLEY ROAD 11.00 AM**

Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> Mrs. Juliet Foster  
Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> Mr. Ken Lees -Wolfenden  
Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> Boys Brigade (Parade)  
Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup> Rev Heather Pollard  
Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> Rev Heather Pollard (9.30am)



## **PREACHER PLAN**

### **HEATH URC, MANOR DRIVE, 10.30 AM**

Jan. 5<sup>th</sup> Rev. John Jenkinson  
Jan. 12<sup>th</sup> Mrs. Dawn Walker  
Jan. 19<sup>th</sup> Rev Heather Pollard  
Jan. 26<sup>th</sup> Mr. Jim Walker

### **NEW HOPE URC, WARLEY ROAD 10.30 AM**

Jan. 5<sup>th</sup> Mr. Alan Jowett  
Jan. 12<sup>th</sup> Mrs. Juliet Foster  
Jan. 19<sup>th</sup> Mr. Martin Pollard  
Jan. 26<sup>th</sup> Mr. Rev John Jenkinson

### **NEW PROVIDENCE URC, KEIGHLEY ROAD 11.00 AM**

Jan. 5<sup>th</sup> Mrs. Juliet Foster  
Jan. 12<sup>th</sup> Rev Heather Pollard  
Jan. 19<sup>th</sup> Mrs. Sue Lees-Wolfenden  
Jan. 26<sup>th</sup> Mr. John Brooksbank





## Useful Numbers

Rev Heather Pollard [ministerhalifaxgroup@gmail.com](mailto:ministerhalifaxgroup@gmail.com) 248957

Mrs J Simmons (Heath) 365355

Mr D Truswell (New Hope) 883908

Mrs S Wolfenden (New Providence) 244402

Heath URC. [www.heathchurchhalifax.org.uk](http://www.heathchurchhalifax.org.uk)

Providence URC. [www.providencechurchovenden.org.uk](http://www.providencechurchovenden.org.uk)

URC web site: [www.urc.org.uk](http://www.urc.org.uk)

Yorkshire Synod [www.urcyorkshire.org.uk](http://www.urcyorkshire.org.uk)

Robert Brook (editor) [robertbrook@sky.com](mailto:robertbrook@sky.com) 07811535832



## February Deadline



All contribution need to be in by **FRIDAY JANUARY 10TH Please.** These can be either handed in to your church reps or stop press direct to the editor at: [robertbrook@sky.com](mailto:robertbrook@sky.com)

Thank you.