

Keyworth Methodist Church

Minister

Rev Tony Simpson

Website

www.keyworthmethodistchurch.yolasite.com

Key-Notes Editor

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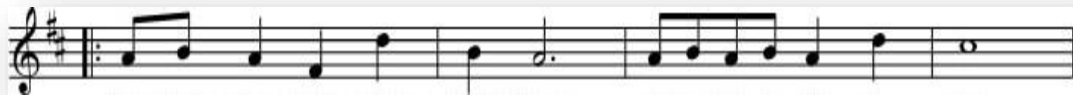
DECEMBER 2023 ISSUE 13



KEYNOTES



**'KEEPING US CONNECTED
AT KMC'**



**What's that
tune?**



THE CHRISTMAS EDITION!



CHRISTMAS SERVICES AT KMC

December

- 3rd 10.15 Dougals Kerr
- 10th 10.15 Paul Johns 4.00 pm Christingle
- 17th 8.30 Rev Tony Simpson 10.15 All Age Nativity Service – Rebecca Bilsbrough
18.30 Joint Methodist/Catholic Carol Service at KMC
- 21st 18.00 Reflective Quiet Service Rev Tony Simpson (Thursday)
(A service for anyone who is finding the merriment of Christmas hard, This is an opportunity to be quiet and reflect.)
- 24th 10.15 Louise Beaumont 23.30 Revd Tony Simpson
- Christmas Day 10.00 Rev Tony Simpson Christmas Worship with our Baptist friends.

IT'S A CHRISTMAS CRACKER!

What's the most popular Christmas wine?

"I don't like Brussel sprouts."



THE POWER OF ADVERTISING?

A recent conversation turned to the obscurity of many television adverts today. If I asked you to complete the phrase 'For mash, get' or 'All because the lady loves' my guess is that most of you could do so (answers at the bottom for those too young to remember).

There's currently an advertisement on TV that features one of those all-time classic songs from the Moody Blues and as the ad. unfolds a young man, shot in almost black and white, slowly raises his face to the camera. I can't see the link with the song other than he might be said to look slightly moody but the ad. is for neither nights away in a hotel or for satin sheets, it's actually for a men's 'eau de toilette' whose name, thankfully, escapes me. (*It was Bleu de Chanel – Ed*) On one level you could say that it's worked as I remember the ad. but failed on another level as I can't remember the fragrance I'm supposed to rush out and buy. Bring back Henry Cooper and Brut 33.....



When we consider the period we are in, Advent, we could see it as a long period of potential advertising for Christmas, the shops certainly see it as that although they don't exactly wait until Advent starts before having their 'seasonal aisle' stuffed with all the things a family needs for a celebration – pink reindeer anyone?

But Advent is also the time when we in the Church think of the time when God will come again, the Messiah's second coming. Will there be advertising hoardings counting down to the day? Will

there be a big-budget advertising campaign on TV and in the press with a cartoon carrot telling of Christ's coming in rhyming couplets? I doubt it. However, if you go on to the Methodist Church UK website and search for 'Out of the Ordinary' you will see a web-based advert. But it won't be on a telly near you any time soon and for the reason for this we need to go back around 2000 years.

Jesus' birth was foretold over many generations but the advertising wasn't that effective as most people barely noticed at the time. Those that did had been summoned by a heavenly choir which, I'm pretty sure, was hard to ignore then you're out there in the fields watching sheep with not much else to occupy your thoughts. Even those who came later (possibly around three years later and not to the stable) were prompted by a star. Yet despite that quiet beginning, the baby born to a young girl and a carpenter was to be the turning point of history and, two thousand years later, is the focal point for devotion for many millions of people. Is this the power of advertising? I don't think so. The Church tends not to do big budget advertising – it can't afford it for starters – but it doesn't need to for the Church can point to something that is greater than the power of advertising, the power of love. For God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten son..... That son brought the message of love into the world and it was that same love that saw Him crucified to demonstrate that love withheld nothing, not even death, and that death was not the end for those who believed in the son.

'A thing called love'; 'The power of love'; 'Love changes everything'. Just three songs that try to capture the power of love. At carol services we might sing 'Love came down at Christmas' for that is what it truly did. And we're still talking about it now without the need for advertising.

May I wish you a happy, blessed and peaceful Christmas and may the New Year bring all that you wish for. May the peace of the Christ-child be yours. *Rev. Tony Simpson*

(And those answers? '....Smash' - Cadbury's Smash instant potato and '.....Milk Tray' chocolates.)

To watch a series of out of the ordinary 'adverts' see

[\(https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/out-of-the-ordinary/\)](https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/out-of-the-ordinary/)



MEMORIES OF CHRISTMASSES PAST

Chicken for Christmas?

I grew up in a small village in North Norfolk. My dad was a Methodist Pastor with the responsibility for nine small chapels, scattered over quite a large area. Every year a farmer (who was a member of one of those chapels) gave him two plucked cockerels. One was for us and the other was for my dad's parents, who lived in Tonypany, South Wales. My mum was given the task of packing up the cockerel in a cardboard box. I seem to remember she filled out the gaps with onions and cooking apples. My grandparents' address was then added and off it went to the local Post Office. It always arrived safely, probably the following day and was duly cooked, eaten and enjoyed. I never heard of anyone succumbing to food poisoning. Those were the days of a reliable postal service and before health and hygiene were ever thought of!! Gwyn S

Melvis Remembers

I'd be around 9 or 10 years of age on this particular Christmas Day. I was with my Mum and Dad and we lived across the road from my Grandma and Grandad Selby.

I remember it was very busy in the large kitchen where Christmas dinner was being prepared but I could just see, behind a clothes horse with a sheet dangled over it and right in the corner was Floss, Grandad's dog. She was a sort of brown terrier and was in the middle of giving birth to puppies of course. I didn't understand any of it and had no idea where puppies came from., you didn't in those days at such a young age. Floss had a litter of six puppies and we eventually had our Christmas dinner after all the excitement!

Pat Smith Remembers

"Living on a farm Christmas day started early - stock to be fed and cows milked before breakfast, and then walking to church for morning service. Having exchanged greetings with all, and called on cousins it was home for lunch. Christmas dinner was always goose, reared at home. I hated those birds because it was mine and my sister's job on Saturday mornings to let them out, and feed them, and they always ran close behind us cackling, but they tasted delicious.

When we were teenagers we went round Southwell and some outlying houses carol singing on several evenings, closely supervised by older members. This was probably necessary as we had old-fashioned paraffin lamps on poles as our means of light. There were several large houses where we would go up the drive and sing at the front door. An effort was made to sing outside the houses of older members of the congregation to show they were not forgotten. On the last evening the two Misses Dowse, who owned a drapers and ironmongers shop in the town, and were leading members in church life, always invited us back for a hot drink and mince pie. Looking back now it almost sounds, and must have looked, Victorian, but it was also very good fun and must have raised funds for some good cause.

Granny and Grandad always came round for tea on Christmas evening, and on Boxing Day an elderly gentleman, who was a Salvationist, came round for lunch.

My mother always made a Christmas pudding for our postman as a thank you because in those days postmen went round on bikes and he must have had a large area to cover. I think he also had quite a number of cups of tea during the year. Making puddings and cakes was rather more work than as fruit had to be picked over and cleaned, and suet came from the butcher, not in packets, and had to be grated."



It was the night before Christmas..... never to be forgotten.....

It was the night before Christmas and there was definitely a buzz in the house. In the kitchen Mum was putting the last of the Christmas mince pies in the oven and the spices in the air were making my mouth water. I was sure I deserved one because I had spent what seemed like hours putting little crosses on the base of all the sprouts we would need tomorrow when all the family arrived. The sitting room was cosy with a bright fire and a log, Yule or not, was giving off a good heat and an occasional spark reminded us that the fire was alive. Dad had pulled it to the side in the wood shed back in October and I remembered hearing him say, 'that'll do nicely,' with a smile on his face. The room was festooned with paper chains stretching from all four corners to meet up at the light in the centre of the ceiling. I am sure they had come out for at least the last seven or eight years but they still looked good.

My pals were in from across the lane and we were playing Monopoly. Rosalind had a pile of money in front of her and lots of houses and hotels so every time I came round the board my cash pile dwindled some more. We were drinking Cokes and dipping into a box of Milk Tray my Granny had given my sister for her birthday last weekend. December birthdays? No thank you, I have seen how she would get one gift for her birthday and Christmas together. I liked my birthday in July. Mum was tidying the kitchen and singing along with the cathedral choir on the radio.

"Dad" she called, "would you like a cup of tea before we go out?"

"Yes please love, and a nice piece of shortbread would go down a treat."

The cups back in the kitchen and our Cokes all finished, Mum said it was time to go. It was nearing eleven o'clock and it would take us half an hour to walk through the streets then down the long wooded road to the ancient building lying in the hollow by the river. The day of the mini was not long past and we now had our coats with hems lengthened and then trimmed with fur to make a maxi look. Our scarves trailed almost to the ground even though we wound them round our neck three times.

We walked, sometime two by two and sometime four in a row. The street lights reflected on the snow mounds where the plough had been out earlier in the day and a 'shoosh' came from the cars which slowly passed so many people on the road tonight, talking quietly and wishing each other a happy Christmas. There was almost an expectation in the air and we girls giggled as we thought how like a snake we all were as we wound down the road.

The oak doors of the church were now in sight and we could hear the organist setting the atmosphere for this late-night service. The church pews were all dressed with crisp white linen cloths usually used for Communion Services and the lights shone brightly in contrast to the stained-glass windows, their beautiful colours all darkened at this time of night. Every row was filling and so again we squiggled further along the rows. A hush descended on that lovely church and the service of carols and lessons began. The voices soared up to the rafters and the familiar words, long known, seemed to take on new meaning on this special night.

The bells were ringing out over the river and drifting up the valley on the other side as the service finished. It was much colder as we left the church and a deep frost had descended. Such an excitement hung in the air that night that we girls couldn't help singing as we all climbed back up to the town and our cosy beds. Our breath hung in the air in front of us, our toes were so cold in our fashionable but useless boots that scrunched on the frozen snow and the stars were shining so brightly from a dark cloudless sky. Hope for the future seemed to touch everybody.

We left our pals a few feet from home with hugs as for long lost friends, oblivious of the fact we had been with them for hours and would no doubt see them on Christmas Day to share the excitement over what Santa had brought. Oh what a night, never to be forgotten. *Evelyn Shearer*



Mortlack Church Dufftown

Chris Dashwood Remembers

Christmas Eve was a time when family members visited my Grandparents who lived with us. Most of them were farmers as well, so milking was completed a bit earlier so we were all ready to sit down at the extended table in the kitchen warmed by the aga for cold meats, chutneys, delicious desserts and yummy homemade cakes! With lots of jokes and catchup conversations, it was then all hands-on deck to do the washing up in the scullery; afterwards in the front room, pulling crackers and sharing jokes then games - the more ridiculous the better.



Around midnight, everyone shuffled off home and Dad would go out into cowsheds to give the cows an extra feed, (sometimes the occasional Christmas lamb would put in an appearance) which was very special. However, for me it was the quiet contentment of the cattle enjoying their midnight feast - the sweet smell of their breaths and the sound of them chewing the cud, each in their own stall. Rex the dog snuggled in amongst the hay bales. Outside, it was either bitterly cold on occasions or just damp. However dry inside, it was still pretty draughty to remain there for comfort and

good to get back into the warmth of home; and yet, it was a similar setting for the arrival of the Saviour of the World! The world outside was in relevant comfort, when His birth was announced to the humble shepherds who would have felt at home in that humble stable with the animals.

Christmas parties and family gatherings will take place again. Towns and homes will be lit up with Christmas trees and decorations in an effort to 'enjoy' ourselves. In the meantime, the real meaning of Christmas is becoming pushed into the background and there are those who see the message of Christmas and Easter as an irrelevance. I am so thankful for the memories I have of those precious moments confirming the love and presence of One who shared space with His creation in such a wonderful way. Let us pray for all the Christian activities in whatever form this Christmas - that the message of the angels will speak once again to our nation and world. Forgive us Lord for leaving you as a baby and remind us again of your teachings and love which ended on the cross; that we worship a risen Lord and One who longs to walk beside us to guide and enjoy that special peace which the world cannot give.

Christmas 1978

We arrived in Bunny in September 1978. Three months later we spent Christmas Day in the newly opened Queen's Medical Centre. The children's ward was one of the first to be used on F floor. Travelling home from an appointment at QMC in late November a little voice asked when told he would be in hospital for Christmas, "Will I get any presents there?" As it got nearer to Christmas there were requests for a few things, including a trumpet!! We didn't think that a really good idea, fearing the noise it would make for the nurses! So other purchases were made and delivered on Christmas Day. When we arrived what greeted us was a loud trumpet!! The nurses knew he wanted one and that we had said no, but they got him one anyway!! It was an unusual Christmas, but the nurses and the Doctors who carved the Turkey and served the Christmas dinner made it a fun time. For just a short time Patrick was allowed out of traction. His bed was too large to get through the door, so Peter was asked whether he would be happy to have Patrick sitting on his knee for the Christmas entertainment in another room along the corridor!! What a Christmas present - for Peter! *June C*



FROM THE CHILDREN AND FAMILY WORKER (CYP)

We have had a great start to the new school year and have seen consistent numbers in our Wednesday Toddlers and Toddler Praise groups and we ran a new event – a Light Party! This saw us having a disco in the Church with lots of dancing and cool moves from our young visitors as well as Mums, Dads and Grandparents! There were lots of light themed crafts in the hall including glow in the dark UV bracelets which were a particular hit which the children expanded into making lizards and all manner of things. We had a time of worship, dancing to songs and talking about how Jesus shines out in the darkest of times and then shared lots of pizza together. This Christmas time we are looking forward to exploring the Christmas story with the children and their families.

When I used to work in education, there was a big change to moving towards a more calming/relaxed Christmas. Hygge (hue-gah) was the buzz word from Danish culture. It means appreciating the little things, being cosy, content and being with nature. Maybe this year, instead of buzzing around from one thing/event to the next, we could make a point of doing something to create a moment of simple joy?

- Enjoying a scented candle with a warm drink and a good book
- Getting in touch with an old friend
- Take a wintery walk looking at the lights
- Look at old Christmas photos
- Bake gingerbread
- Sing along to your favourite Christmas carols/songs
- Play a board game
- Sit and watch the world go by

Obviously with my faith I always found a way to include God into my times of 'hygge.' When watching the world go by I would pray internally for different people. When reading a good book, I would choose the Bible or a Bible study and reflect on its teachings/verses or when decorating the house I would make sure that the birth of Jesus was the centre of our decorations. A wintery

walk has included a prayer walk or using that time to catch up with a friend and putting the world to rights. Adding in some 'hygge' into my January and February considerably improved my post-Christmas mood and is always significantly improved by deepening my faith and relationship with God. *Rebecca B*



Modern Letter to Santa

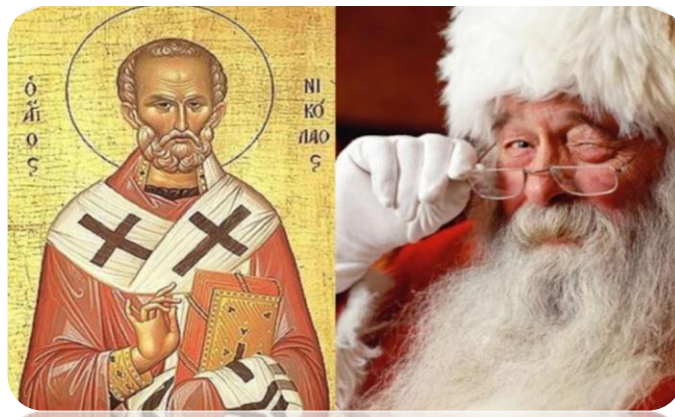
As a little girl climbed onto Santa's lap, Santa asked the usual, "And what would you like for Christmas?" The child stared at him open mouthed and horrified for a minute, then gasped: "Didn't you get my E-mail?"

WHO WAS SAINT NICOLAS?

His name has become corrupted over the years to Santa Claus, his feast day is December 6th, and he is responsible for filling children's stockings with presents.

But what, if anything, do we know of him?

The answer is, we don't know much, but we do know he was Bishop of Myra in Asia Minor in the 4th century, that various miracles were attributed to him, that he was imprisoned for his beliefs, and that he was a member of the first church council at Nicaea.



He is also the subject of a Cantata by Benjamin Britten – one featuring a choir, a choirboy solo, instrumental music and two traditional hymns sung in full by all the performers and the audience. It was performed wonderfully last year in Southwell Minster by the brilliant amateur Nottingham Harmonic choir. At the opening of the Cantata, the singers implore the 'simple man within the saint' to 'cross the tremendous bridge of sixteen hundred years' and speak to them. Their invitation is accepted and Nicolas addresses them in words that seem to me to be directly relevant to us, today.

**'Across the tremendous bridge of sixteen hundred years
I come to stand in worship with you
As I stood among my faithful congregation long ago.
All who knelt beside me then are gone.
Their name is dust, their tombs are grass and clay,
Yet still their shining seed of faith survives in you!
With you it stands like forest oak
Or withers with the grasses underfoot.
Preserve the living Faith for which your fathers fought!
For Faith was won by centuries of sacrifice
And many martyrs died
That you might worship God.'**

Christine Cooke

CHRISTMAS CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Miriam

I hope you don't mind me writing. You've been such a good friend for so long. I need your advice. I had a real shock yesterday. You know my daughter, Mary? She came to tell me that she thinks she's pregnant. She says it's two months since she needed her cloths. I know it's possible. But not my Mary, surely? I know she's growing physically, and I know there are boys in the village who are looking at her with admiration. But I just can't believe she's gone that far with any one of them. After all, we had an agreement with the family of Joseph that when she was ready, she'd marry him. I know he's a good deal older, but he's a good man - kind, caring, and he'd make a good husband for her and father to her children in due course.

But I've not told you the worst yet! I fear she may be losing her mind. She speaks of being visited by an angel. Says her baby has nothing to do with any man. It's God's doing, she says. She was just asked if she'd do this job for God – be the mother of his son. Has she lost her mind?

My dear friend, I don't know what to do. If my dear Joachim were still alive he'd advise me. In his absence you are the only one I can turn to.

Anne

CHRISTMAS CORRESPONDENCE – continued

My Dear Anne

Thank you for trusting me with this news. I can understand your shock.

As I see it, there are four possibilities. Either Mary is wrong about her condition, (hat time will tell) or she's made a big mistake with one of the village lads. But would that stop you loving her? Make sure she knows that you'll stand by her if that is the case. Or could Joseph be the father? That would break with all our holy traditions, but Mary is a beautiful young woman, and Joseph wouldn't be the first man to be impatient. As you say – he's a good man, and, if he is the father, you will, I know, find it in your heart to welcome him into your family. The other option, of course, is that Mary is telling you the truth. Is she usually truthful?

There's just one thing I feel sure about. God can bring good out of even the darkest moments. Be patient. Wait to see what happens. In the meantime, give Mary all your love. It's a frightening time for her. She needs you now more than ever before.

Your loving friend

Miriam

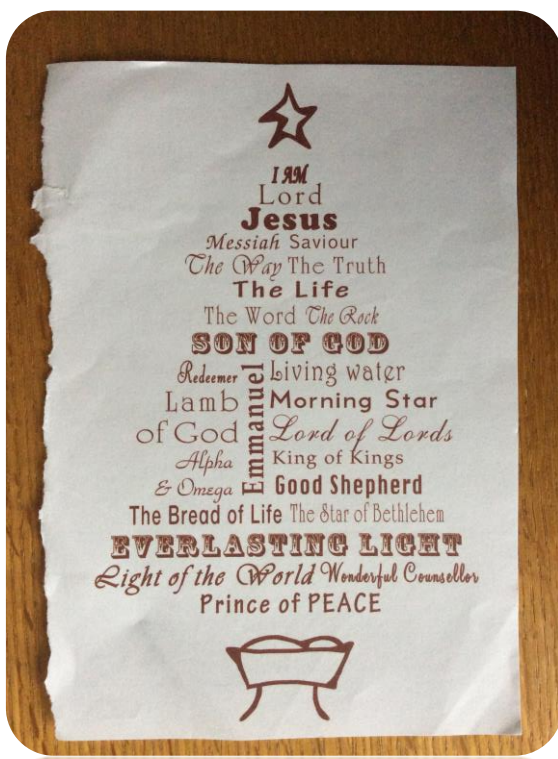
HAVE YOU A FEW MINUTES TO SPARE?

A Christmas Quiz

Can you identify words which include four consecutive letters from the word CHRISTMAS from these clues?

Example:	Clue	Word	Letters
	In perfect condition	Pristine	RIST
Over to you:	In charge of deliveries	Beauty	Notorious flats
	Liverpool and Everton	High-born	Expert gardener
	Procedure for enrolling	Franked	
	Utterly defeated	Honeymoon, for example	

ANSWERS ON PAGE 13



Dear God

Back then, at the first Christmas:

You knew about the shepherds, working late at night

You knew about the travellers following the light

You knew about the crowds with their hopes and fears

You knew about the stable and poor Mary's tears

So right now, because of Christmas:

You know about outsiders, who feel they don't belong

You know about the stranger who speaks another tongue

You know about the exile who's forced to leave her home

You know about the foreigner who feels so much alone

You know about the poor whom nobody will know

You know about the puzzled who feel they've far to go

You bring them close in Jesus, each specially loved by him

You turn things inside out and bring outsiders in.

TIME TO DISCOVER

During Autumn, we started to explore what we knew about various Old Testament prophets, and so far we have looked at **Elijah** and then **Elisha**. Other topics have been how our use of everyday **language** expressions can interact with **how we believe**. And then **how the Bible came to become what we have today** with its compilation of Old and New Testaments (and the Apocrypha) from various language source texts. Leading next to a discussion of how the **Jesus of Nazareth** historical accounts compare with the subsequent theological understandings in the New Testament. Our **'Christmas Miscellany'** sharing of poems, readings, hymns, music etc will this year be on **Friday December 8th**



We restart in the New Year on **January 11th** sharing **'Objects of Faith'**, and we are pleased that **Andy Fyall** has agreed to be with us on **January 25th**. For **February 8th** the topic is **'Eternity'**. Thereafter during **Lent** we will become **one of the Churches Together groups**. As always, see KMC weekly notices for updated details, and for hosting addresses.

Our meetings are open to any who may wish to come along – whether regularly or whether just for an occasional topic of interest. And if so, it can be helpful to hosts if you let the host or myself know beforehand. If you want to know more about the group, just contact Robin Wilcockson. *Robin*



U3A EXPLORING WORLD FAITHS

We continue to normally meet on the **third Friday afternoon of each month** at 2.0pm in the **Centenary Lounge** of the Village Hall, although

occasionally we have a visit instead. After our August break, we restarted in **September**, on the topic of **'Holy Places'** of various faiths, noting (not surprisingly) some similarities. In **October** we had intended to **visit** a Nottingham **Eastern Orthodox** Church, but on the day **storm Babet** was doing its worst and the **visit had to be postponed**. In **November** we started to look at the topic of **'Art and Faith'**, with Chris Cooke sharing a presentation on Art throughout the ages in Christianity. This year we will be having an **informal meeting** in **December**, possibly including some input from a national zoom meeting on how various faiths share in the Christmas season.

Into next year, our **January** topic will be **'Religion and English Culture'** introduced by David Charles, and for a **later date** we hope to have the **rearranged Orthodox Church visit**.

In the group we have participants from various faith (and indeed no-faith) backgrounds, and with a good representation from KMC. If you are interested in coming along, please contact Robin Wilcockson to find how to join u3a, if not already a member. *Robin*

Magdalene's Community Café.



We are a monthly no charge "pop up" café in the Parochial Church Hall, kindly supported by St Mary Magdalene's Church. Small donations are welcome but down to personal choice. We provide a friendly, welcoming and safe place for all the community where local folk can get together with old friends and make new ones. All this over a cuppa and treats, to chat or just listen, sharing interests and reviving old happy memories. No formality just friendship. .

We want everyone to enjoy being together, leave feeling better and with a smile on their faces, happy to return the following month.

We are open between 10am and 12 noon on the third Wednesday of each month so make it a date! We look forward to seeing you there. Interested? Then e-mail Bill Lawrenson at w.lawrenson@ntlworld.com or call Diana Jones on 078 919 46680, or dianajones1949@gmail.com Alternatively - just turn up and enjoy.

Epiphany 2023

What is the time the Magi came
the decorations had been taken down.
the tree untrimmed, the baubles packed
away.

Twilight gave way to starlight as they came:
Saturn was bright among the Hyades.
and Jupiter from Gemini looks down.

Strange gifts they brought and urgent
questioning:

"Where is the king whose birth you?
celebrate?"

We did not know. Our Christmas junketing.
had scarcely left us time to think of him.

Gold as a present they have bought for him;
"A gift," they murmured, "worthy of a king,"
and we agreed. Their other gifts, we
thought,

were less appropriate. Incense and myrrh
bore overtones of worship and of death.
The first we left behind in Sunday School
And of the second seldom cared to think.

The questions and their gifts disturbed us.
The king they sort we viewed with some
unease.

Eager, we'd been, to celebrate his birth,
much less so to accept his sovereignty.

To 'love our neighbours as we loved.
ourselves',

his firm command, we'd found too difficult.

"Go home", we urged them, "by another
way.

The world is little changed since you last
came.

Still Herod's hand is red in Bethlehem.
and still for murdered children, Rachel
weeps.

David Yarham

*'The Legend of the Christmas Rose' was found on
this card from Evelyn Shearer's Granny's era. I find the
final 5 lines of David Yarham's poem particularly
poignant given the present situation in the Holy Land.
Thanks to Gwyn S for providing it. Ed*

The Legend of the Christmas Rose

Bearing with them precious gifts
Of gold and frankincense and myrrh
Wise men travelled from the east
To where Joseph, Mary and Jesus were.

Watching from afar that day
A little shepherdess we're told
Looked on and wept, because she had
No gifts of frankincense and gold.

Then something wonderful took place
For as her tears fell to the ground
The little shepherdess looked down
And saw flowers growing all around.

She gathered them and joyfully
Before the infant's crib she knelt
Her gift of flowers, showing him
That adoration that she felt.

He touched the petals lovingly
As if each one was so revered
And every place he put his hands
A bit of softest pink appeared.

And so a flower that never bloomed
In any place or clime before
Began to grow that very day
To bloom at Christmas evermore!



HAVE YOU A FEW MINUTES TO SPARE?

Christmas Song Anagrams

1	Tinsel Thing	
2	Man Weary Again	
3	Acknowledge Song Is	
4	Emulate Iffy Alcohol	
5	She Knew Tiger	
6	Be Twelfth Hot Moonlit Eel	
7	Perish His Waste	
8	Slither Often	
9	They'd Halve Holy Tin	
10	Let Mum Do Terribly	
11	Hell's Earthshaking Garden	
12	Remedy Gentle Energy Storm	
13	Jet Dry Hot Wool	
14	Red Window Lantern	
15	Actress With Him	
16	Hydrostatic Sow Methinks	
17	We End Testimonial	
18	Concertmaster Horsehair Dung Kit	
19	Ambush Wayside Hydroelectric Visit	
20	Woman's Hefty Snort	

Pick from these possible answers :

Do They Know It's Christmas	The First Noel
Mistletoe and Wine	While Shepherds Watched
Once in Royal David's City	Winter Wonderland
Little Drummer Boy	Good King Wenceslas
Rocking Around The Christmas Tree	Last Christmas
O Little Town of Bethlehem	God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen
Hark the Herald Angels Sing	Frosty the Snowman
O Come All Ye Faithful	Away In A Manger
The Holly and The Ivy	Santa Claus is Coming to Town
Jingle Bell Rock	We Three Kings
Silent Night	Joy to the World
Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer	I Saw Three Ships
White Christmas	I Wish It Could Be Christmas Every Day

ANSWERS ON PAGE 13

PAST PRESENT AND FUTURE



As we approach the season of Advent our focus will be on Jesus as the Light of the World and the Promised Messiah. The two Gospels of Matthew and Luke both have 'Birth Narratives' telling, in very different ways, how they understood the human birth of Jesus. Both accounts are steeped in imagery regarding light. Matthew brings us the star that guided the Wise Men to Bethlehem while Luke tells that "The glory of the Lord shone around," as the angel appeared to the shepherds. Matthew has the Wise Men asking Herod where the Messiah is to be born while Luke has the angel announcing that the Messiah has been born in the town of David.

All through the Gospels, the people closest to Jesus were so slow to recognise his true identity. In Mark's Gospel chapter 4 the disciples ask "*Who is this? Even the wind and*

the waves obey him!" after Jesus had calmed a storm on the lake. But the real crunch, also in Mark's Gospel, comes at the midway point in Chapter 8: 27 - 30

Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, "Who do people say I am?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Messiah." Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.

It is interesting to note the two different answers given to Jesus' question about his true identity. Many people today, when asked about Jesus, would consider him to be a figure of history – a figure of the past but not the present. Likewise, 'the people' considered Jesus to be one of the prophets. In other words, he was, to them, a figure of the past.

Peter, however, in a rare moment of inspiration says, 'you are the Messiah'. Matthew enlarges this answer to 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.' This makes Jesus, not a figure from the past but a living reality and a divine one at that. No longer can Jesus be identified in the pages of history books but was relevant to the present moment and indeed the future too.

The Christmas story divides people into these two camps. To some it is a romantic story from the past while to others it is story which has relevance to people today and indeed, determines their eternal destiny.

Some say that we have distorted the Christmas story by merging the two accounts of Matthew and Luke into one. Hence, nativity plays have both Wise Men AND shepherds but neither birth narrative has both. They also have Mary riding a donkey, supposedly from Nazareth to Bethlehem while Matthew knows nothing of this.

However, we might understand the birth narratives of Matthew and Luke – some see them as literal while others look beyond the literal to the symbolic or theological truths – our responsibility is to impress upon visitors to our nativity plays that Jesus is for TODAY, not yesterday. *Roger Johnson*

DON'T BE AFRAID

Did you know that we read this phrase 365 times in the Bible which amounts to one for each day of the year.

Whenever angels appear in the Christmas Story they never fail to say "Don't be afraid!"

Zechariah, Joseph, Mary and The Shepherds were all addressed in this way.

God does not want us to live in fear!

HAVE YOU A FEW MINUTES TO SPARE? - ANSWERS

A Christmas Quiz from page 8

Answers:	In charge of deliveries	Postmaster	STMA or TMAS
	Beauty	Pulchritude	CHRI
	Notorious flats	Highrise	HRIS
	Liverpool and Everton	Archrivals	CHRI
	High-born	Aristocratic	RIST
	Expert gardener	Horticulturist	RIST
	Procedure for enrolling	Enlistment	ISTM
	Franked	Postmarked	STMA
	Utterly defeated	Outmastered	TMAS
	Honeymoon, for example	Postmarital	STMA

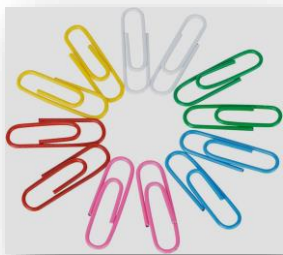
Christmas Song Anagrams from page 11

Answers

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Silent Night | 2. Away in a Manger | 3. Good King Wenceslas |
| 4. O Come All Ye Faithful | 5. We Three Kings | 6. O Little Town of Bethlehem |
| 7. I Saw Three Ships | 8. The First Noel | 9. The Holly and the Ivy |
| 10. Little Drummer Boy | 11. Hark the Herald Angels Sing | |
| 12. God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen | | 13. Joy to the World |
| 14. Winter Wonderland | 15. White Christmas | 16. Do They Know It's Christmas |
| 17. Mistletoe and Wine | 18. Rocking Around The Christmas Tree | |
| 19. I Wish It Could Be Christmas Every Day | | 20. Frosty the Snowman |

Name that Tune from Page 1

Answer: Rudolf the Red Nosed Reindeer



KEYNOTES PAPER CLIPS..... – COLLECTION!

As readers of the paper version of KeyNotes will know, it is fastened, as was its predecessor Keeping Connected with a coloured paper clip. I felt that this was helpful rather than using a staple so that anyone can read the pages individually if they wished, rather than being restricted by a staple. Over the last three years I have used more than three thousand! If you happen to have saved any of them, I would be happy to receive them back so they can be recycled and reused!! Thanks *Geoff D*

THE BEST CHRISTMAS EVER ?

Christmas was going to be different this year. Father called a family conference and challenged them to make sure they did not spend so much on gifts. He wanted much better behaviour with visiting relatives and a happier atmosphere in their home. He brought his speech to a splendid climax with his final rallying cry, "Let's make this the best Christmas ever."

His youngest son countered his father by noting,
"But Dad, I don't see how we could ever improve on the first Christmas!"

IT'S A CHRISTMAS CRACKER

As the nights get colder, can I recommend a nice hot bath, put on a Michael Buble CD You can then say, " I've had a lovely Buble Bath "



**O sad and troubled Bethlehem
(tune O' Little Town')**

we hear your longing cry
for peace and justice to be born
and cruel oppression die.
How deep your need for that great gift
of love in human form
Let Christ in you be seen again
and hearts by hope made warm

While morning stars and evening stars
shine out in your dark sky
Despair now stalks your troubled streets
where innocents still die
and Jesus child of Mary
whose love will never cease
feels even now your pain and fear
longs with you for your peace

Amazingly and lovingly
Jesus the child has come
and brought to birth through human pain
makes broken hearts his home.
He comes to comfort all who weep
to challenge every wrong
and living with the weak and poor
becomes their hope, their song.



BETHLEHEM THIS CHRISTMAS!

Since the beginning of the Israeli-Hamas war, ignited by the killing of hundreds of Israeli civilians in communities near Gaza by Hamas militants, Bethlehem has been under siege. The Israeli Defence Forces' closure of all the roads into Bethlehem is strangling its economy. With little money, families are conserving their resources. Few cars are on the road. Restaurants are closed. Schools are open intermittently. These troubles are light, though — and everyone in Bethlehem knows it — compared to the devastation of Gaza. The prevailing mood in the city of the birthplace of the Prince of Peace is one of depression and anger at the indiscriminate bombing

in all parts of Gaza, and the thousands of innocent Palestinian lives lost, including 3,500 children

The following is the final part of November Reflections of the situation in the Holy Land by of the Chief Executive of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Mr. Sami El-Yousef

“Despite a rather desperate and very negative situation characterized by massive destruction and loss of innocent life, the Church continues to shine through being on the forefront of providing not only shelter and material support, but more importantly daily masses and various pastoral activities under shelling and severe conditions of war.

Additionally, at a time of severe polarisation between people with calls of killing, revenge, and hatred filling the streets, the Christian message of forgiveness, coexistence,

tolerance, love, and peace does not change during times of war.

It is critical that this message continues to guide our society so that some track can be found to move forward to reach justice and peace to all who call the Holy Land home.

Humanity must return and all children of God regardless of their religion or nationality should be treated equally with dignity. Please keep praying that this war comes to an immediate end now. ”



An empty Manger Square – Bethlehem