

# Magazine

December 2018 / January 2019

Christmas appeal

The real Christmas

In the Secret garden



Zion  
United  
Reformed  
Church

~ Northallerton ~

# Zion and Community

Sunday 10.00 a.m.	Morning worship Communion every 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday Bright and early and a warm welcome every week
Monday 9.30 a.m. to 11.00 a.m. In term time	Tiny time Mums, come and join us in the Church Hall for a chat and a cuppa while the children play
Wednesday 10.00 a.m. to 12 noon	'Way In' A chance to get a coffee or tea and a chat
12 noon to 12.30 p.m.	A chance to sit and eat your packed lunch warm and dry
1.00 p.m. to 1.30 p.m.	Market Day service A time for quiet reflection in the midst of a busy day
Saturday 10.00 a.m. to 12 noon	'Way In' More coffee and chat

**Permission is required to reproduce any of the items in this magazine**

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## Pastoral letter

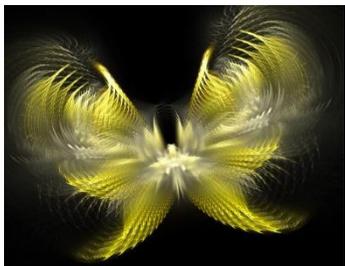
Dear Friends,

On my way to the Synod office for a meeting on Bonfire Night, I passed a large shop window. Music was being piped into the street. The window displays were eye-catching. People of all ages were stopping and looking. Quite a few had mobile phones in their hands taking photographs. The following week, having to take the same route, the shop window display was still attracting joyful attention of passers-by. On that trip I passed lots of little huts being set up, clearly for a seasonal market at the weekend. I also noticed at least one seasonal pop-up shop.

The shop window, of course, was Fenwick's; the display 'The Snowman' – that perennial seasonal tale. I guess the market would be a Christmas market, and the pop-up shop had all manner of Christmas products for sale. Yes, Christmas is coming!

That may produce in you a groan, or a murmur of delight and expectation. Fenwick's window was certainly creating reactions one might almost describe as awe and wonder among the

children, reactions shared (or they pretended to share) by their parents. Christmas shopping will begin to increase, with the sense of excitement and weary exasperation so characteristic of the Christmas shopping crowds.



Will it be excitement or weary exasperation for us in Church as we progress through December? Will we have a sense of Advent's looking forward in expectation, or a weary round of the annually repeated celebrations of Christmas?

I'm not hinting that we should do away with the usual patterns, rather than that we should not just go on auto-pilot because it's 'that time of year'. Whether it's the tried and tested carol service, or something different, we need to be open to the good news and a sense of awe and wonder the incarnation should inspire. How can we take for granted the message of God with us? Why should we accept Advent hope being submerged under commercialism's mantra of 'happiness through spending'? Amid all the robins, snowmen, and twinkling trees, we should not lose sight of the real nativity story and its central message of hope – God is with us, to draw us to his kingdom, the kingdom of love, peace and justice. That's good news, indeed, for everyone.

Yours in his service,

*Stephen*

## **Light at the end of the tunnel**

On the 19<sup>th</sup> September we received news that Traidcraft was commencing a period of consultation with its staff that was likely to result in the company ceasing trading by the end of the year. Despite its long tradition, dating back to 1979; Traidcraft sales in recent years had been declining. Coupled with this, the value of the pound when set against the dollar had slipped quite considerably making it far more expensive to pay for the goods supplied by producers from around the world.

However, following the staff consultation and widespread support expressed by its supporters, the board of Traidcraft have drawn up a revised plan to continue operations from January 2019 with a 'slimmed-down' version of Traidcraft which is likely to concentrate on the sale of a smaller range of products that can be better sustained into the future. Naturally this will inevitably have implications on staff numbers at Traidcraft and similarly the proportion of producers that can continue to be supported in the longer term. As for the producers that may be affected in this way, its sister organisation Traidcraft Exchange (a separate independent charity) has vowed to maintain financial support and education where it is most needed, as far as their funds allow.



The new year will bring fresh challenges for Traidcraft – making it more aware to us that it is not just some of the high street shops that are suffering in these economic times- but the board of Traidcraft and its supporters are determined to continue support to the most vulnerable producers in an ethical and transparent way through genuine Fairtrade.

Thank you for your support, month by month, as every purchase does give real support to so many.

*Roger Tucker*

Traidcraft Stall dates:

Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> December and 27<sup>th</sup> January

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*It is imperative that we maintain hope  
even when the harshness of reality  
may suggest the opposite*

*Paulo Friere (1921-1997)*

## *You are invited...*

'Let's have an open Christmas lunch this year', we decided.

For the first time in living memory Paul and I were to spend Christmas on our own sans children, spouses, grandchildren... they had all made other arrangements. So, in the trusty magazine we sent out an invitation to any who were likely to be on their own and would like to be around another table, to join us.

Christmas morning arrived and the guests had given us due notice. Turkey ready the night before and all was set. I arrived home from having taken three services on Christmas morning and one at midnight on the night before Christmas...(I used to take out 6 different sermons it has to be said as until I got into each church, I never knew of which people the congregations would be comprised...children? Families? Traditional elderly people? Regulars? Strangers? And so on.)

So, I was very tired by the time the veg were on and roasties coming to perfection. At that point my mother rang and I suddenly found myself so exhausted I was sliding down the wall with my phone in my hand. Please understand no glass of dry white had yet been consumed as I had to keep my head clear for the guests.

Because it was indeed to be a challenge logistically and culinarily! There were four guests who had responded to the invitation to my glorious traditional Christmas lunch. One who wanted to come but had to sit at a different table to the others. One was a vegan, one ate meat but only if it had not had feathers on during its active life, and one who wanted it at his

home to enable him to stay at home with his family the rest of whom were veggies. (So, meals on wheels then. I made the mistake of thinking that as a man, he would like a turkey thigh replete with crackly skin which will teach me not to make gender assumptions about male taste in turkey joints. The next year he had breast!)

It all reminded me of one of my Christmas cards. We see the three wise men in their house with their pinnies on. They have just finished cooking the Christmas dinner. The table is all beautifully and festively laid. Candles lit, glasses sparkling. All is ready. Through the arched window of the little Eastern house, you can see coming down the path towards the lit and welcoming humble dwelling Mary and Joseph pushing a toddler sized little boy, Jesus, in his buggy. One wise man says to another, *“Last year we went to their place. This year they are coming to ours.”*

He will knock in a variety of disguises. Will we recognise him when he comes?

*Anne Bowes*

## **Christmas card appeal**

For a number of years, we have had a Christmas Card Appeal, which enables us to make a donation to an agreed charity in lieu of sending Christmas cards to each other. At the November Church Meeting it was agreed that the chosen charity for this year should be Hope for Justice.

Hope for Justice aims to combat modern day slavery and human trafficking by rescuing victims, restoring lives and society.

Their specialist investigators work closely with police to identify victims, build bridges of trust with them and remove them from situations of exploitation. They then work with the victims to help them to overcome the trauma they have experienced and to rebuild their lives. Hope for Justice also trains professionals and volunteers to spot signs of modern day slavery, to respond accordingly and to campaign for policy change.

Dr Sonia Soans, one of the contributors to a recent edition of Reform focussing on slavery said, "Christians are exhorted to strive for justice at all times. Social justice isn't a fad, or a secular trend, it is the heart of our faith. Slavery robs a person of their dignity. To own another person is not only immoral but also unchristian. Slavery embodies everything our faith is against when it comes to respecting life."



More information about Hope for Justice and our Christmas Card Appeal will be available in church soon.

*Christine Roddam*

## **Love in action**

Lord of the downtrodden, the unwanted, the homeless, the frightened,

Give us the perspicacity to see how we can make a difference,  
the will to do something that will make that happen  
and the courage to stand up and be counted.

Make us the catalysts who will show the world what the love of God in action is all about.

Help us all to be instrumental in giving all who need it a second chance.

Amen.

*Sue Kennedy*

## Pause for thought

So, what has been going on in the Secret Garden this year?

Rather surprisingly, I hadn't realised how work in the garden would be quite so closely married to the seasons! There was a slow, and not very patient, build up through winter, and rather like buds - poised and ready to burst out - it was hard to contain ourselves whilst waiting for winter to let go of its grip. Then we were flung headlong into summer and had to run to keep pace with the unfolding year and growth. It is only now that the pace has slowed, we can enjoy the harvest, and take time to reflect, look and enjoy the garden.

### **Structure**

After spending most of last year clearing the second plot, we finally planted it up this spring. The garden has been a blaze of colour and humming with bees and other pollinators; different areas coming into their own at different times of year. Dave Puttock built four new archways and erected some trellis to give support for climbers. Four new benches or arbours were donated by volunteers or their friends, one from Barkers and one from Tesco's in memory of a colleague who sadly died. There are now plenty of nooks and crannies to just sit and be.

## Wildlife

The “wilder” end of plot 2 has retained much of the ivy, brambles, nettles and wildflowers for the wildlife. We have added a wildlife friendly hedge, a clover “meadow”, log piles and nest boxes to our existing pond, dry hedge and hedgehog hotel. To share our love of nature, we did our first bug survey with Jane’s guides, learnt about minibeasts with the cubs, took part in the Big Garden Bird Watch with the ATI group and started to identify our butterflies and bees. Romanby School used the garden to help their study of evolution.



## Produce to share

Thanks to dedicated watering by Audrey and Martin we have survived the drought and had a bumper harvest. It started with rhubarb, gooseberries and strawberries and continues with beans, potatoes, onions, sweetcorn and much more. All of which we have shared with those needing to use the food bank, our volunteers and the Women’s Refuge.

## People

In addition to our regular volunteers each Monday and Thursday, others have joined us at various times.

A group called Action Toward Inclusion worked with us for the first half of the year, using our market stall in April and the open day as the focus of their activities. They also helped us with the second open day during the food festival with their fund scavenger hunt for children and creative garden related products and ideas. It was a win-win for all of us!

Help for Heroes spent two days doing some creative writing and then ceramics. Cubs visited on three



occasions to do their gardening and naturalist badges. The Guides planted annuals, christened our campfire area and fire pit and helped with the bug hunt. One of our volunteers is starting a Forest School for toddlers which will help children to love, and learn from, nature. Our Syrian friends helped with some planting and painting too.

We had another creative afternoon making mosaics in the sunshine and two courses of gardening for beginners. Audrey informs me that many people visit on market days to buy plants and sit with a drink or wander around enjoying the colour, scent and peacefulness.

With all of this business and activity it is lovely to stop and be still. The Church has now registered the garden with the Quiet Garden Trust and Ann Bowes and her team held our first 'Quiet Day' for time out and reflection using our senses. It was lovely to welcome many from around the town and further afield. Our own church's 'Indoor/ Outdoor Service' was also a remarkably precious time for listening and being.

The strap line for our church here at Zion is "to live by faith, to be known by love and to be a voice of hope". We have long embraced caring for creation as being part of the expression of our faith and have actively sought to serve our local community in many different ways. The Secret Garden is part of all of this.

What is also very humbling is the response from the community in return; its enthusiasm, generosity and support, the stories of inspiration, hope and transformation. Perhaps all of this is why we were awarded the 'Community Project Award' from the United Reformed Church and Congregational Insurance.



This picture shows just a few of the many people who have made it possible. In

reality everyone at church should be in this picture too. Without my amazing church family and your willingness to take a risk, take that step of faith and support this project, none of this would have happened.

Thank you.

*Liz Styran*

## Self- help in Malawi

Back in 1995, Crosby and Jenny Mphande, she then a school secretary and a Women's Guild leader at Lingadzi Presbyterian Church, he a water engineer and a preaching Elder, had the vision and faith (and little means) to start the **Orphan Care and Social Rehabilitation** Project in area 25 township, Lilongwe, in response to the devastation caused to so many extended families by the AIDS epidemic - often only one no-income grandparent left alive to provide for and bring up many children.

The vision was - and always has been - to inspire the whole local community to fill the gap and care for ALL such orphans in their area. The five local headmen play their part by checking to ensure each child supported is truly an orphan without adequate adult support. The vision has spread far and wide, directly to three centres at Karonga in the far north, indirectly by word-of-mouth and example to lots more of Malawi's innumerable villages.

For many years now, we as a Church have helped with an annual gift from the Charity Fund. It's therefore a thrill now to receive this up-to-date [October 2018] report from Crosby

himself:

*The Centre is still active. The Hall is being hired out to the community, and whatever proceeds received complement expenses for the daily sustenance of the children. We have on average one hundred Primary School children receiving meals at the Centre. A further thirty are getting early childhood [= pre-primary] education, they also receive meals and fortified porridge, stationery and gifts of clothing. Stationery and clothing are also given to sponsored Secondary School children. The Karonga Centre has ninety-six children, all receiving early childhood education. We used to receive fortified porridge from Feed the Children, but they have shifted their focus to the north of the country - so the Karonga Centre still benefits, but at Lilongwe we have to buy this flour for the young ones in our care.*



*Both Secondary and Primary school children have clubs and run activities such as drama, volleyball, soccer and netball. We have established a library from the gifts of school books sent through CART [Christian Africa Relief Trust, Huddersfield]. The library is very popular with students who come to be helped in their free time.*

*Widows and guardians are being encouraged to operate micro [or communal] banking at the Centre, to support their welfare. The Secondary School Student Sponsorship scheme is still running as long as sponsors are identified. It has been a very successful programme and some of the students have acquired tertiary training as teachers. Ackson Damiano is teaching at a private secondary school; Simon Munde is a director of an NGO which supports the disabled; Alice Kameza and Mphatso Magonjetsa are teachers; Joyce Magonjetsa and Tisungane Lusewa are Community Development Officers, to mention a few. Of the recent students whose results we have received, Fahida Mfutsu*

has passed her Malawi School Certificate Examination [MSCE] and is awaiting selection to college It has been difficult to get feedback on progress from the students because the schools have been sending the progress reports to parents and guardians (seems good to do that). We are now arranging with the schools to send us copies of the school reports so that we can share with you eventually. (These students have been financed by the sponsorship scheme).

God Bless you all.

*Crosby Mphande.*

Personal gifts for the Centre are always welcomed by the Secretary of the [UK] Friends of OCSR, Cynthia Feather, 10 Norton Close, Halifax HX2 7RD, e-mail [cynthia@jcfear.plus.com](mailto:cynthia@jcfear.plus.com), tel 01422 357739, and

Alison Bowers, 2 High Apprentices, Hardistry Hill, Otley LS21 2PJ, e-mail [alibowers5@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:alibowers5@yahoo.co.uk) , tel 01943 990192, delights to have enquiries and gifts for secondary school sponsorships.

*Malcolm Smith*

P.S. In the first 25 years of their marriage, the Mphandes never had an evening off from children - from their wedding day onwards nieces and nephews etc. dropped in on them for long-term care. Now at their 50th anniversary, do we suppose it's ever been any different?

**News of the family**

Not included in on-line edition



*Christine Roddam*

## Church Diary

### December

Sat 1 <sup>st</sup> Dec	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
	10.00 am	Way In
Sun 2 <sup>nd</sup> Dec	10.00 am	Morning Worship (Miss Lesley Bustard)
Mon 3 <sup>rd</sup> Dec	9.30 am	Tiny Time
Tues 4 <sup>th</sup> Dec	2.00 pm	Elders' Meeting (Cottage)
Wed 5 <sup>th</sup> Dec	10.00 am	Way In
	12.00 pm	Lunch-time "Drop-in" (Large Vestry)
	12.00 pm	Soup & Roll Lunches

		(Church Hall)
	1.00 pm	Midweek Worship (Mr Matthew Appleyard)
Thurs 6 <sup>th</sup> Dec	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer Meeting (Cottage)
	7.30 pm	WIZI - Women's Group (50 Colstan Road, Northallerton)
Sat 8 <sup>th</sup> Dec	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
	10.00 am	Way In
Sun 9 <sup>th</sup> Dec	10.00 am	Morning Worship (Revd Stephen Collinson)
Mon 10 <sup>th</sup> Dec	9.30 am	Tiny Time
	12.00 pm	Jane & Paul's Housegroup (Golden Lion Hotel, Northallerton)
	7.00 pm	Men's Group (Cottage)
Tues 11 <sup>th</sup> Dec	2.15 pm	Northallerton Churches Ladies Together Advent Service (Thornton Le Beans Methodist Church)
Wed 12 <sup>th</sup> Dec	10.00 am	Way In
	12.00 pm	Lunch-time "Drop-in" (Large Vestry)
	12.00 pm	Soup & Roll Lunches (Church Hall)
12 <sup>th</sup> cont...	1.00 pm	Midweek Worship (Mr Roger Tucker)
	7.00 pm	Joint Pastorate Elders' Conference (3 Cottage Close, Northallerton)

Thurs 13 <sup>th</sup> Dec	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer Meeting (Cottage)
Sat 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
	10.00 am	Way In
Sun 16 <sup>th</sup> Dec	10.00 am	Communion Service (Revd Hilary Collinson) <i>Commitment for Life Sunday</i>
	11.00 am	Traidcraft Stall
Mon 17 <sup>th</sup> Dec	9.30 am	Tiny Time
	7.00 pm	Jo & Judith's Housegroup (Cottage)
Tues 18 <sup>th</sup> Dec	12.30 pm	Sue & Liz's Housegroup (Rivendale)
	1.00 pm	Reading Circle (Joe Cornish, Northallerton)
Wed 19 <sup>th</sup> Dec	10.00 am	Way In
	12.00 pm	Lunch-time "Drop-in" (Large Vestry)
	12.00 pm	Soup & Roll Lunches (Church Hall)
	1.00 pm	Midweek Worship (Miss Lesley Bustard)
Thurs 20 <sup>th</sup> Dec	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer Meeting (Cottage)
Sat 22 <sup>nd</sup> Dec	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting

		(Church)
	10.00 am	Way In
Sun 23 <sup>rd</sup> Dec	10.00 am	Carol Service (Revd Hilary Collinson)
	2.30 pm	Christmas Service (Southwoods Care Home)
Tues 25 <sup>th</sup> Dec	10.00 am	Christmas Day Service (Revd Stephen Collinson)
Thurs 27 <sup>th</sup> Dec	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer Meeting (Cottage)
Sat 29 <sup>th</sup> Dec	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
	10.00 am	Way In
Sun 30 <sup>th</sup> Dec	10.00 am	Morning Worship (Revd Michael Webster)

## January

Wed 2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan	10.00 am	Way In
	12.00 pm	Lunch-time "Drop-in" (Large Vestry)
	12.00 pm	Soup & Roll Lunches (Church Hall)
	1.00 pm	Midweek Worship (Mrs Esther Witts)
Thurs 3 <sup>rd</sup> Jan	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer Meeting (Cottage)
	2.00 pm	Elders' Meeting (Cottage)

	7.30 pm	WIZI – Women's Group (Cottage)
Sat 5 <sup>th</sup> Jan	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
	10.00 am	Way In
Sun 6 <sup>th</sup> Jan	10.00 am	Morning Worship – Celebrating 200 (Revd Hilary Collinson)
	11.00 pm	Coffee and Cake
Tues 8 <sup>th</sup> Jan	2.15 pm	Northallerton Churches Ladies Together New Year Party (Romanby Methodist Church)
Wed 9 <sup>th</sup> Jan	10.00 am	Way In
	12.00 pm	Lunch-time "Drop-in" (Large Vestry)
	12.00 pm	Soup & Roll Lunches (Church Hall)
	1.00 pm	Midweek Worship (Mr Roger Tucker)
Thurs 10 <sup>th</sup> Jan	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer Meeting (Cottage)
Sat 12 <sup>th</sup> Jan	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
	10.00 am	Way In
Sun 13 <sup>th</sup> Jan	10.00 am	200 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service (Revd Nigel Uden – Moderator of General Assembly)
	12.00 pm	Church Lunch

Mon 14 <sup>th</sup> Jan	9.30 am	Tiny Time
	2.00 pm	Jane & Paul's Housegroup (Dunnas House, Brompton)
Wed 16 <sup>th</sup> Jan	10.00 am	Way In
	12.00 pm	Lunch-time "Drop-in" (Large Vestry)
	12.00 pm	Soup & Roll Lunches (Church Hall)
	1.00 pm	Midweek Worship (Miss Lesley Bustard)
Thurs 17 <sup>th</sup> Jan	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer Meeting (Cottage)
	N.B. Last date for items for the Feb/March magazine	
Sat 19 <sup>th</sup> Jan	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
	10.00 am	Way In
Sun 20 <sup>th</sup> Jan	10.00 am	Communion Service (Revd Stephen Collinson) <i>Commitment for Life Sunday</i>
Mon 21 <sup>st</sup> Jan	9.30 am	Tiny Time
	7.00 pm	Jo & Judith's Housegroup (Cottage)
Tues 22 <sup>nd</sup> Jan	12.30 pm	Sue & Liz's Housegroup (Rivendale)
Wed 23 <sup>rd</sup> Jan	10.00 am	Way In
	12.00 pm	Lunch-time "Drop-in" (Large Vestry)

	12.00 pm	Soup & Roll Lunches (Church Hall)
	1.00 pm	Midweek Worship (Mrs Iris Miller)
Thurs 24 <sup>th</sup> Jan	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer Meeting (Cottage)
Sat 26 <sup>th</sup> Jan	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
	10.00 am	Way In
Sun 27 <sup>th</sup> Jan	10.00 am	Morning Worship (Mr Jo Kennedy)
	11.00 am	Traidcraft Stall
Mon 28 <sup>th</sup> Jan	9.30 am	Tiny Time
	7.00 pm	Men's Group (Cottage)
Wed 30 <sup>th</sup> Jan	10.00 am	Way In
	12.00 pm	Lunch-time "Drop-in" (Large Vestry)
	12.00 pm	Soup & Roll Lunches (Church Hall)
	1.00 pm	Midweek Worship (Revd Hilary Collinson)
Thurs 31 <sup>st</sup> Jan	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer Meeting (Cottage)

## Elders' duty rota

If you have any problems and would like to speak with someone

please contact the Ministers, Secretary or the Duty Elder as given below

**Week beginning**

**December**

**2<sup>nd</sup>** Jane Haslam

**9<sup>th</sup>** Jo Kennedy

**16<sup>th</sup>** Judith Puttock

**23<sup>rd</sup>** Christine Roddam

**25<sup>th</sup>** Jo Kennedy

**30<sup>th</sup>** Liz Styan

**January**

**6<sup>th</sup>** Paul Bowes

**13<sup>th</sup>** Sue Bush

**20<sup>th</sup>** Jane Haslam

**27<sup>th</sup>** Jo Kennedy



**Ministers:** Rev Hilary Collinson and 01748 821586  
Rev Stephen Collinson

**Secretary:** Susan Bush 01609 882468

**Treasurer:** Judith Puttock 01609 771282

**Organist:** Carol Hogg 01609 883319

**Room booking:** Lesley Bustard 01609 776990

**Magazine editors:** Sue and Jo Kennedy 01609 881408  
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**Church:** Answerphone 01609 779610  
N.B. No incoming message facility

**Website:** [www.tsurc.org/](http://www.tsurc.org/)



We hope you have enjoyed the magazine and invite you to worship with us at High Street, Northallerton at our 10 a.m. Sunday service.

**Please note that the closing date for items for the February/March issue is 18<sup>th</sup> January**