

Magazine

December 2019/January 2020



Everlasting light

A different Calendar



Look before you leap



Zion
United
Reformed
Church

~ Northallerton ~

Zion and Community

Sunday 10.00 a.m.	Morning worship Communion every 3 rd 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

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Pastoral letter

Dear Friends,



*O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in the dark street shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.*



This carol was very much in my mind as early one morning I made the journey from the Palestinian family home my sister and I had been staying in in Beit Sahor – an area in Bethlehem Municipality – up into Manger Square.

It was a warm sunny day! The cool of the Church of the Nativity was welcome, even at 8 o'clock in the morning. Already pilgrims and tourists were wandering around drawn to this place 'where it all began'. Although unable to go deeper into the supposed cave of the Christmas story as there was a service going on, I joined a group of French pilgrims singing 'Gloria, in excelsis deo' with two ladies in saris, 4 ladies with lacy hats and several men of various nationalities all drawn to this place.

The hopes of all the years met together in this moment.

However, the eldest daughter of our hosts, a 24 year old science teacher, told us a few days into our visit of her encounter with Israeli Defence Forces who held a gun at the car window

directed at her head as she was leaving her fiancé's home telling her to go back into his house. She was still quite shaken.

Her father had to be at the checkpoint every morning by 5 am to try to get through to his work as maintenance man at a Church in Jerusalem – sometimes (although not when we were there) waiting hour upon hour – or even being turned away.



The reason we were there was to pick the olive crop and the farmers whose crop we were picking were so glad to have 'Internationals' visible in the fields as Illegal Settlers have been allowing farmers to pick their crop, then they would come to steal the olives at the end of the hard day's toil.

The week before we went a group of 'Rabbis for Human Rights' had also been a protective presence in a Palestinian field and they had been beaten up – including an 87 year old Rabbi.

The fears of all the years were also present in my mind as I reflected quietly in the Church.

As I thought about all of this – and many more experiences – I reminded myself that the very reason Jesus was born in Bethlehem was because the occupying force ordered a census to be taken.

A few days before I had sat outside the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, again surrounded by pilgrims and tourists, contemplating the end of Jesus's life and his weeping over Jerusalem. At times it can seem that the darkness of the world can block out even the glimmer of hope. Yet the very scheme we had gone out under is called 'The Olive Tree Campaign – Keep Hope Alive'. Perhaps those middle lines of the carol are those that we should hold onto:-

'Yet in the dark street shineth the everlasting Light;'

As Christmas approaches and then recedes into the memory let us keep the everlasting light before us so that the hopes of all the years can become tomorrow's reality.

A very blessed Christmas to you and yours and to those you pray for in this season.

Yours in service

Hilary

C.A.R.T

These are changing times for the Christian African Relief Trust whose strap line is '*Caring for people, resourcing development*'

Their latest container to Malawi (Lilongwe) was despatched in November, another follows, to Zambia, in December, another to Malawi (Mzuzu) in January, another, this time to Cameroon, in March. Packed with items for Orphan Care such as school uniforms, tables, chairs, children's books, dry and tinned foods from local churches' and schools' harvest festivals, plus items

labelled for other Lilongwe recipients - including Bibles and Christian literature we and friends have sent for ministers in training at Nkhoma - let alone a refreshed bicycle, sewing machine or computer supplies requested by others.



CART, set up and run by a Huddersfield team of enthusiast volunteers, supported by

Polytechnic (now University) staff and students, local schools, Rotary clubs, supermarkets, churches and many individuals, has been doing this regularly for some 21 years now. All gifted goods are welcomed; any not suitable for Africa are sold as fund-raisers in CART's local shop.

But container shipping costs grow massively all the time; internationally these are quoted in dollars, and currently the pound sterling keeps dropping in value. Seven years ago, shipping was devouring a 95% of CART's income, so at that point the Trustees decided to move more and more into direct funding, in the seven countries served, of reliable partners' projects that can be ongoingly sustained by local effort. Now, more than half CART's overall support goes abroad in this way. And the reduction already in the number of containers being sent is significant and will increase: autumn 2020 may well be our last opportunity to send Christian literature etc. to Lilongwe by this means.

Projects already fostered and growing this last seven years in Malawi, for example, include goat and pig rearing, chicken hatching, tree planting, fruit juicing (two schemes), school nutrition farming, mosquito net production, solar panel power provision for a skills centre. Meanwhile, premature baby incubators designed and trialled in Huddersfield have been hand-made in hundreds in Tanzania. And for this Christmas CART has a new project to plant copses of fruit trees - mango, jackfruit and maringa oleifera (the 'miracle tree') - in selected areas of Uganda, Malawi and Cameroon where CART already has local expertise on the ground. If you would like to share in this sponsorship (£5 pays for 5 saplings), please collect an information leaflet in the Church foyer.

Malcolm Smith

Christmas is coming

Today we can spend more than ever on advent calendars but as they get more elaborate and expensive, maybe we lose some of the simple joy of counting down to Christmas.

Instead, at Traidcraft Exchange they are saying this Christmas that it is better to give than receive. So, they have designed an advent calendar that costs us nothing.... but gives us a chance every day to make the world a better place.



This is the advent calendar that matters.

This Christmas they are partnering with a hand-picked selection of world changing organisations to provide us with 24 simple ways to make the world a better place.

Every day until Christmas they will send us an opportunity to stand up for justice in a simple way.

Here are the rules...

It will always be free.

It will always take less than 5 minutes to complete.

So, we could be signing petitions, sending short emails, maybe even texting a friend... but we won't be giving any money and we won't be losing hours of our day either. It is simply a way to count down to Christmas with a series of good deeds.

Christmas is about hope...light in the darkness. Don't miss a chance to add a little more light. To sign up please search:

<https://traidcraftexchange.org/injustice-advent-calendar>

Roger Tucker

Matthew and us

A chance for you to get these dates for Bible study in your diaries now and get to know Matthew. Each study will explore the passage using a different approach to Bible Study – so no month will be the same – except we will sit with Matthew's Gospel and share together. So that there is a greater chance of you being able to attend, the same study sessions are being offered twice each month - one on Sunday evening at 7.30 p.m. and one on Thursday afternoon at 2.30 p.m.

The dates are: -

Sunday Jan 12th and Thursday Jan 16th

Sunday Feb 16th and Thursday Feb 20th

Sunday March 22nd and Thursday March 19th

Sunday April 19th and Thursday April 23rd

Sunday May 10th and Thursday May 14th

Sunday June 21st and Thursday June 25th

Sunday July 19th and Thursday July 23rd

Sunday August 16th and Thursday Aug 20th

Sunday Sept 20th and Thursday Sept 24th

Another 'happy holiday'

Thank you, Hazel...

Fifty years married, and the feminine continues to amaze and delight me, so 72 hours with half a dozen 'spare ribs' was an intriguing prospect - older and wiser than myself though they

may well be. Somewhat challenging, but 'Hazel's Happy Holidays' sounded reassuring.

The Scottish Borders are a lovely backdrop to any relaxing break. Specifically, Whitchester Christian Centre is rurally based in a generously proportioned Victorian house, sheltered by trees and surrounded by three acres of beautiful gardens. What's not to like?



An arrival after three hours of rain-lashed journey was soon palliated by judicious use of teapot, biscuit and cake, followed by a communal 2-course meal, with lashings of custard a popular final highlight!

What to do on our two full days? Strangely the first day massaged everyone's latent retail genes via Hawick's many clothing factories and emporia, most specialising in luxurious local cashmere and tweed. Actually, the sales rack in a large Sainsbury's opened the purses for clothes too! Of course, coffee-shop stops punctuated the spending splashes. I sensed more than one addiction.

The second day saw greater divergence between the two car-based groups into which the party had divided. One trio of occupants headed off ambitiously, only to find that the local authorities had set up a series of mysterious road diversions, apparently located to thwart their reaching any intended destination. With a fatalistic happenstance though, a hundred miles of motoring harvested a further valuable crop of coffee-shops, but nothing cultural!

Meanwhile the second car zig-zagged to Sir Walter Scott's gothic mansion, Abbotswood, with state-the-art visitor centre cum uber-smart restaurant/cafe - which we duly honoured of course. Then to different delights - on the one hand a quirky house bristling with knives, armour, books and gargoyles galore; on the other an anteroom to the compact chapel displaying a couple of (newly

topical) Cardinal Newman's historic copes once regularly worn there.

In summary, we were not attempting to be a worthy retreat group, but we simply bonded in mutual support and enjoyment. Evenings saw the chapel room more music-hall than religious space as singalongs and humorous read outs set the mood. And at the end of the whole brief experience all the serendipity had worked!

And what of my little gender experiment? Of my time as Daniel in the lionesses' den? Well, nothing profound perhaps. But just an affirmation of the truism that 'In Christ there is no North and South...'

Now, pass me a decaf please...

Paul Bowes

Church Diary

DECEMBER

Sun 1 st Dec	10.00 am	Advent Service (Revd Hilary Collinson)
Mon 2 nd Dec	9.30 am 7.00 pm	Tiny Time Cottage Crafters – Craft Group (Cottage)
Tues 3 rd Dec	2.00 pm	Elders' Meeting (Cottage)

Wed 4 th 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 (Mrs Esther Witts)
Thurs 5 th Dec	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer Meeting (Cottage)
	7.30 pm	WIZI - Women's Group (50 Colstan Road, Northallerton)
Sat 7 th Dec	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
	10.00 am	Way In
Sun 8 th Dec	10.00 am	Morning Worship (Revd Stephen Collinson)
Mon 9 th Dec	9.30 am	Tiny Time
	2.00 pm	Jane & Paul's Housegroup (Dunnas House, Brompton)
Tues 10 th Dec	2.00 pm	Growing Leaders Course (Coffee Lounge)
	2.15 pm	Northallerton Churches Ladies Together Advent Service (Northallerton Methodist Church)
Wed 11 th 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 Roger Tucker)

Thurs 12th Dec	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer Meeting (Cottage)
Sat 14th Dec	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
	10.00 am	Way In
	2.00 pm	Nativity Rehearsal
Sun 15th Dec	10.00 am	Communion Service (Revd Stephen Collinson) <i>Commitment for Life Sunday</i>
	11.00 am	Traidcraft Stall
	2.30 pm	Christmas Service (Southwoods Care Home)
Mon 16th Dec	9.30 am	Tiny Time
	TBC	Sue & Liz's Housegroup (Venue TBC)
	7.00 pm	Jo & Judith's Housegroup (Cottage)
Tues 17th Dec	1.00 pm	Reading Circle Christmas Meeting (Joe Cornish, Zetland Street)
Wed 18th 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 19th Dec	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer Meeting (Cottage)
Sat 21st Dec	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)

21 st cont...	10.00 am 2.00 pm	Way In Nativity Rehearsal
Sun 22 nd Dec	10.00 am 2.30pm	Carol Service (Revd Hilary Collinson) Walking Nativity (Church and Garden)
Wed 25 th Dec	10.00 am	Christmas Day Service (Revd Hilary Collinson)
Sat 28 th Dec	9.15 am 10.00 am	Prayer Meeting (Church) Way In
Sun 29 th Dec	10.00 am	Morning Worship (Mrs Hilary Jackson)
Mon 30 th Dec	7.00 pm	Men's Group (Cottage)

JANUARY

Thurs 2 nd Jan	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer Meeting (Cottage)
Sat 4 th Jan	9.15 am 10.00 am	Prayer Meeting (Church) Way In
Sun 5 th Jan	10.00am	Morning Worship (Revd Hilary Collinson)
Mon 6 th Jan	7.00 pm	Cottage Crafters – Craft Group (Cottage)

Tues 7 th Jan	2.00 pm	Elders' Meeting (Cottage)
Wed 8 th 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 9 th Jan	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer Meeting (Cottage)
Sat 11 th Jan	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
	10.00 am	Way In
Sun 12 th Jan	10.00 am	Morning Worship (Revd Stephen Collinson)
	7.00 pm	Bible Study (Cottage)
Mon 13 th Jan	9.30 am	Tiny Time
	2.00 pm	Jane & Paul's Housegroup (Dunnas House, Brompton)
Tues 14 th Jan	2.15 pm	Northallerton Churches Ladies Together New Year Party (Northallerton Methodist Church)
Wed 15 th Jan	10.00 am	Way In
	12.00 pm	Lunch-time "Drop-in" (Large Vestry)
	12.00 pm	Soup & Roll Lunches (Church Hall)

15 th cont...	1.00 pm	Midweek Worship (Mr Roger Tucker)
Thurs 16 th Jan	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer Meeting (Cottage)
	2.30pm	Bible Study (Cottage)
Fri 17 th January	Last date for items for February/March magazine	
Sat 18 th Jan	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
	10.00 am	Way In
Sun 19 th Jan	10.00 am	Communion Service (Revd Hilary Collinson) <i>Commitment for Life Sunday</i>
Mon 20 th Jan	9.30 am	Tiny Time
	7.00 pm	Jo & Judith's Housegroup (Cottage)
Tues 21 st Jan	2.00 pm	Sue & Liz's Housegroup (Rivendale)
Wed 23 rd 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 23 rd Jan	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer Meeting (Cottage)

Sat 25 th Jan	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
	10.00 am	Way In
Sun 26 th Jan	10.00 am	Morning Worship (Mrs Rowena Webster)
	11.00 am	Traidcraft Stall
Mon 27 th Jan	9.30 am	Tiny Time
	7.00 pm	Men's Group (Cottage)
Wed 29 th 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 30 th Jan	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer Meeting (Cottage)

A Dolphin Trip?

Hmm! I think I might.

I had been on an expedition to Cromarty (yes of shipping forecast fame), on the bus; an adventure day off from my retreat house. I wanted to revisit the cheese-shop. There you could taste a sliver of Dutch cheese shredded off large round pieces, for you to savour, enabling personal discernment of choice: with

cumin seeds, coriander seeds, goat with potato. One's selection would be carefully wrapped with exquisite folds in brown paper parcels by the man who had had enough of the rat race in the South. I heard that he was once asked, *'Can you actually make a living selling Dutch cheese in a place like this?'* He replied, *'I don't know yet, but coming here I know what it is to have made a life!'*

So, there I was, with my cheese parcels, replete after a lunch of langoustines in garlic butter when I spied from the window a sign next door - *'Dolphin and Wildlife Trips' 2 hours. 2.00pm. 1 space left.*

'Well' I thought, *'I would be back in time for my bus.'* Good job I had worn my dungarees and mac. Dolphins and other wildlife, here I come! The vintage clothes and book shops would have to wait until next time.



I approached the office from whence the expedition began. As I entered, I thought that there must be another trip on the way out maybe to the Arctic Circle or some distant part in the North Atlantic. Because out came apparently androgynous figures (you could only see a nose), walking, legs akimbo in identical suits. Thick padded waterproof trousers and matching long jackets with hoods pulled up. Signs under the hood were of thick elasticated ear protectors, goggles and the final encompassing item of clothing was a life jacket. I was just in time to hear the instructions of how to operate the life enhancing inflatable nature of that garment. Phew! Thank goodness I was only going out on a pleasure boat on a dolphin trip.

However, on crossing the threshold, there on the counter was MY sailing outfit too, awaiting my robing! They did help me to put it on as I tried to keep a brave face on this unexpected situation and turn of events. I followed the others down to a locked gate on the harbour steps and I could not see a boat for the life of

me. Then - Oh my goodness - it was a Rib Ride. For those who do not know, these are black and red blow up raft like-water vehicles but look like a rib cage of a whale or some vast water creature. I have seen them in Devon. They move like speedboats thundering over the waves; you can hear them banging up and down from up on the cliffs. Why do I never learn to check things out? Then it became a matter of pride (always comes before a fall) to get my leg over the edge and on to one of the little tiny seats which have to be straddled now for 2 hours. NO STANDING! Panic! Is my ageing body up to this?

Well, of course we saw no dolphins along the coastline, in the middle of the North Sea or anywhere else. But we did encounter some sea gulls and a shag or two in passing, and we did have a close-up of the oil rigs, those mysterious erections, and a bit of an excursion around them at a great rate of knots.

'Terrifying yet exhilarating' has been my reflection. Followed by a word of warning to myself for whenever I next risk crossing a hitherto unknown threshold...*'if the appropriate clothing looks beyond my comfort zone, so might the experience might be too!'*

Ann Bowes

Be aware

Churches are being informed that there is an email scam purporting to be from the minister using an almost identical address asking members to contribute to a pressing charitable fund. Stephen and I would never send anything like that so please do not respond and report any such activity to the Fraud Line.

Stephen and Hilary Collinson

Memories

As another Christmas approaches, it's a time of year when I tend to look back to times gone by. I remember with fondness that sense of excitement and anticipation that Christmas brings. As a little girl I would long for the 1st Saturday in December as that was when the town's Christmas lights were switched on. It was always a joy to see the bright display of sparkling lights and admire the town's Christmas tree. Alongside this I remember the excitement of taking part in school nativities, enjoying Sunday School Christmas parties, attending carol services and visiting Santa in Binns, our local department store. As well as spending time with family and friends receiving and exchanging gifts. Memories like these are precious to me and I enjoy reminiscing about them.

Since starting this role earlier in the year, it has been a great privilege to get to know many people. I've heard a lot of life stories over the past month which have included many precious memories.

As many of you are aware one aspect of my job role is to look at how we can support people living with dementia and their carers. In recent months I've been exploring how can we make our church communities dementia friendly? How do we adapt our services and activities to include those living with dementia and their carers?

As a result of asking these questions we are going to host our first Memory Church Service.

When: Thursday 19th December between 2-3pm

Where : St James Green Methodist Church, Thirsk- there is onsite parking.

Memory Church is Church done in a slightly different way.

The core elements of a church service will still be there; singing, prayers and a short talk.

So, what will be different?

The overall service will shorter. There will be the use of familiar hymns/ carols and prayers. There will be refreshments and the opportunity to talk and engage in a seasonal craft.

The plan is we will run a Memory Church service in December, one in February and another just before Easter. Longer term we would like to see this type of services run monthly.

If you would like any more information about Memory Church, please do get in touch.

Helen McCormack

Pastoral and Development Worker for older people

Epilogue

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,

The courage to change the things I can,

And the wisdom to distinguish one the another

Reinhold Niebuhr

Traidcraft Shop 2019



Dundas Arcade (formerly Boyes) Middlesbrough

Tel: 07903 119 698

**10am - 5 pm Monday - Saturday
until Saturday December 21st**

*Fair Trade Christmas gifts, cards and foods
from around the world!*



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

1st Paul Bowes

8th Sue Bush

15th Jane Haslam

22nd Jo Kennedy

25th Judith Puttock

29th Christine Roddam

January

2nd Liz Styan

9th Paul Bowes

16th Sue Bush

23rd Jane Haslam



Contact us



Ministers:	Rev Hilary Collinson and Rev Stephen Collinson	01748 821586
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Treasurer:	Judith Puttock	01609 771282
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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 17th January