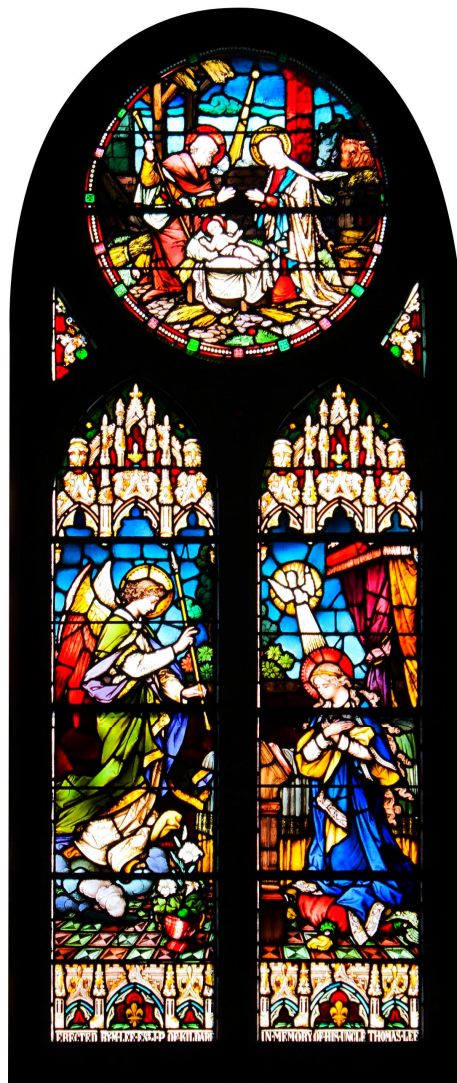


# THE HADLEIGH MESSENGER

December 2016 & January 2017



“You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.  
He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.”

Luke 1:31-32

The Magazine of the  
United Reformed Church, Hadleigh, Essex

## PREACHING ARRANGEMENTS FOR DECEMBER 2016

|                          |         |   |  |
|--------------------------|---------|---|--|
| Sun 4 <sup>th</sup> Dec  | 10.30am | Gift Service                                | Rev. Jack Roche MA                     |
|                          | 6.30pm  | Evening Service<br>with Holy Communion      | Mr Jim Clubb<br>with Mrs Heather Brown |
| Sun 11 <sup>th</sup> Dec | 10.30am | Morning Service                             | Rev. John Ambrose                      |
| Sun 18 <sup>th</sup> Dec | 10.30am | Morning Service<br>with Holy Communion      | Rev. Jack Roche MA                     |
|                          | 6.30pm  | Christmas Celebration<br>with Tea at 5.30pm | Rev. Jack Roche MA                     |
| Thu 22 <sup>nd</sup> Dec | 10.30am | Christmas Midweek Service                   | Rev. Jack Roche MA                     |
| Sun 25 <sup>th</sup> Dec | 10.30am | Christmas Day Service                       | Mr Wilf Tyler                          |

## SUNDAY MORNING DUTY ROTAS FOR DECEMBER 2016

|                          | ELDER                             | STEWARD       | REFRESHMENTS    |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Sun 4 <sup>th</sup> Dec  | Malcolm Brown                     | Marion Fidell | Marion Fidell   |
| Sun 11 <sup>th</sup> Dec | Jean Reeve                        | Ann Purkiss   | Kay Watson      |
| Sun 18 <sup>th</sup> Dec | Heather Brown<br>[Holy Communion] | Marion Fidell | Janet Wimbledon |
| Sun 25 <sup>th</sup> Dec | Malcolm Brown                     | Malcolm Brown | Heather Brown   |

## FLOWER ROTA FOR DECEMBER 2016

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Sun 4 <sup>th</sup> Dec  | John Rice - in memory of Barbara's birthday                     |
| Sun 11 <sup>th</sup> Dec |   |
| Sun 18 <sup>th</sup> Dec | Jean Reeve - in memory of her father's birthday                 |
| Sun 25 <sup>th</sup> Dec | John Rice - in memory of Betty's birthday & wedding anniversary |

### ELDERS' MEETING

Wed 7<sup>th</sup> Dec 7.30pm

### CHURCH MEETING

No meeting in Dec

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Minister:</b><br/>Rev. Jack Roche (01268 455194)</p> <p><b>Hon. Secretary:</b><br/>Mr Royston Brackin (01702 558862)</p> <p><b>Acting Hon. Treasurer:</b><br/>Mr Royston Brackin</p> <p><b>Serving Elders:</b><br/>Mr Royston Brackin<br/>Mrs Heather Brown (01702 557678)<br/>Mr Malcolm Brown (01702 557678)<br/>Miss Jean Reeve (01702 554907)</p> | <p><b>Address:</b> Church Road, Hadleigh, Benfleet, SS7 2DQ</p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.hadleighsexorc.org.uk">www.hadleighsexorc.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>An invitation</b><br/>We invite you to join us for worship and fellowship at any of our services where a warm welcome awaits. If you are in need of help that the ministry of the church can supply then be assured of our interest and concern. If you are suffering from ill health, loneliness or bereavement and feel that we could help, or if you would like to ask for a prayer or personal visit then please let our Minister or any of the other church officers know. All such requests are treated in the strictest confidence.</p> |
|---|--|

## PREACHING ARRANGEMENTS FOR JANUARY 2017

|                          |         |   |                     |
|--------------------------|---------|---|---------------------|
| Sun 1 <sup>st</sup> Jan  | 10.30am | Morning Service                         | Rev. Jack Roche MA  |
|                          | 6.30pm  | Evening Service<br>with Holy Communion  | Mr Wilf Tyler       |
| Sun 8 <sup>th</sup> Jan  | 10.30am | Morning Service                         | Rev. Dr Jim Tarrant |
| Sun 15 <sup>th</sup> Jan | 10.30am | Morning Service<br>with Holy Communion  | Mrs Gillian Thomson |
| Sun 22 <sup>nd</sup> Jan | 10.30am | Morning Service<br>WPCU Pulpit Exchange | Major David Woodman |
| Thu 26 <sup>th</sup> Jan | 10.30am | Midweek Service                         | Mrs Heather Brown   |
| Sun 29 <sup>th</sup> Jan | 10.30am | Morning Service                         | Rev. Derek Kingston |

## SUNDAY MORNING DUTY ROTAS FOR JANUARY 2017

|                          | ELDER                             | STEWARD         | REFRESHMENTS    |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Sun 1 <sup>st</sup> Jan  | Jean Reeve                        | Marion Fidell   | Marion Fidell   |
| Sun 8 <sup>th</sup> Jan  | Heather Brown                     | Ann Purkiss     | Kay Watson      |
| Sun 15 <sup>th</sup> Jan | Malcolm Brown<br>[Holy Communion] | Volunteer       | Jean Reeve      |
| Sun 22 <sup>nd</sup> Jan | Jean Reeve                        | Malcolm Brown   | Marion Fidell   |
| Sun 29 <sup>th</sup> Jan | Heather Brown                     | Janet Wimbleton | Janet Wimbleton |

## FLOWER ROTA

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Sun 1 <sup>st</sup> Jan  |   |
| Sun 8 <sup>th</sup> Jan  | Marion Fidell - in memory of parents' birthdays |
| Sun 15 <sup>th</sup> Jan | Jean Reeve - birthday                           |
| Sun 22 <sup>nd</sup> Jan |   |
| Sun 29 <sup>th</sup> Jan |   |

|                        |
|------------------------|
| <b>ELDERS' MEETING</b> |
|------------------------|

|                                 |
|---------------------------------|
| Wed 11 <sup>th</sup> Jan 7.30pm |
|---------------------------------|

|                       |
|-----------------------|
| <b>CHURCH MEETING</b> |
|-----------------------|

|                                  |
|----------------------------------|
| Thu 26 <sup>th</sup> Jan 12.30pm |
|----------------------------------|

### Meetings in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2017

Wed 18 Jan 2017 - 7.30pm - Methodist Church

Thu 19 Jan 2017 - 7.30pm - SA Temple

Fri 20 Jan 2017 - 2.30pm - United Reformed Church

Sun 22 Jan 2017 - Various - Pulpit exchange

ditto - 6.00pm - UNITED SERVICE at SA Temple

Mon 23 Jan 2017 - 2.30pm - St Michael's Church

You are invited to attend as many of the meetings as you are able.

# Church Ministry

Our Minister, Rev. Jack Roche, has decided after just over 10 years service at our Church, that the time has come to terminate his ministry with us. His last church service as Minister will be on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2017, which is the Sunday following the Easter weekend.

Jack was the stipendiary minister at South Ockendon United Reformed Church for 15 years, following which he took an appointment in Greater Manchester where he was Minister of Hope URC (Denton) and Bridge Street URC (Audenshaw) for 4 years until his retirement. He returned to this area to live at Shotgate in Wickford and then came to us as a non-stipendiary minister, naturally without the full ministerial workload.

During his time with us Jack has taken two Sunday services a month plus services on special Sundays when these have fallen outside the agreed first and third Sundays in each month, e.g. Easter Sunday, Harvest Festival and Remembrance Sunday.

He has also led worship at the monthly Midweek Service a couple of times a year and presided at the Maundy Thursday Passover Communion and at the Easter and Christmas Communions for the Wives' Fellowship.

In addition, Jack has been chairman at our Elders and Church Meetings, led the LifeBuilders (bible study) group, introduced the Men's Breakfast

and regularly contributed a pastoral letter and prayer reflection to our church magazine.

Jack will be greatly missed because of his overall contribution to the life of the church and in particular his quiet, patient guidance at Elders and Church Meetings and his authoritative leading of bible studies.

In his letter to the Elders announcing his intention to end his ministry here, Jack said that he has deeply appreciated the friendship and acceptance that he has found with us and that his decision was not an easy one, but one which came after long consideration.

He will continue to worship at Christ Church Wickford (URC and Methodist), where he is a church member. He will accept preaching engagements from time to time and has said that he is willing to come to our church in that capacity in the future.

There is to be a Farewell Lunch in our Small Hall after Jack's last service as Minister on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2017.

The Moderator of the Eastern Synod has been advised of Jack's impending departure, and he will no doubt endeavour to find some ministerial support for us when Jack is no longer with us.

*Royston Brackin*  
Church Secretary

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## Christmas jokes

A husband and wife were out Christmas shopping just before Christmas. The wife suddenly noticed that her husband was missing, so she called him on his mobile. The wife said "Where are you, you know we have lots to do."

He said "Do you remember the jewellers we went into about 10 years ago, and you fell in love with that expensive diamond necklace that I couldn't afford at the time and I said that one day I would get it for you?"

Little tears started to flow down her cheek and she got all choked up saying... "Yes, I do remember that shop."

"Well I'm in the Poundland shop next door to that."

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Santa went to the Doctor's with a problem.

Doctor: "What can I do for you today"

Santa: "I seem to have a mince pie stuck up my bottom!"

Doctor: "Well you're in luck - I've got just the cream for that!"

## From the Minister

“I know whom I have trusted.” – 2 Timothy 1:12

Dear friends,

I was recently listening to a news item that, at the human level, was tragic in that it concerned a girl of 14 who had died of a rare form of cancer. The unusual aspect was that a court judgement had granted the girl's own request for her body to be preserved by cryogenics. This involves keeping the body at extremely low temperature indefinitely, the hope being that, at some point, possibly centuries later, it may be possible to revive the person and cure the currently incurable condition.

The process is very expensive, involving specialised treatment immediately post-mortem and 'storage' in huge, hi-tech, energy-consuming centres. At present there are three of these in the USA, with 250 'patients' and 1.500 on the waiting list, while one exists in Russia, catering for an unknown number of clients,

The outcome assumes, optimistically, that science will one day be able to deliver 'immortality' by this means although, at present, there is no way of reversing the cryogenic process or, of knowing what will be the final condition of the mortal remains and, most crucially, the brain, even assuming that the complex and expensive preservation process is correctly delivered by those entrusted with it.

Having described the process as 'immortality' and giving enormous comfort to the girl's last days, the news item went on to discuss the experience of 'waking up' in a completely changed world, a total stranger even to the descendants of your friends and family.

Dickens' Scrooge was taken on a time travel journey in both directions but it was the future, that he had come to realise he had made for

himself, that was the most deadly and terrifying prospect of all. Ultimately, he discovered that the man who had passed from this world, unloved, almost un-noticed, with his remaining clothes and bed-linen sold by the cleaning lady for pennies, was himself.

HG Wells' *The Sleeper Awakes* proposes, highly improbably, the investments of a man who had slept for 200 years accumulating until he owned the world, held in trust until he awoke. But, as in most science fiction projections, he discovers that the future is dystopian; fulfilling his worst nightmares rather than his highest hopes.

I recall a *Songs of Praise* broadcast featuring an Isaac Watts hymn during which I imagined our old Congregational forebear looking on, in knee breeches and sombre eighteenth century clerical garb. How would he react, I wondered, as this strangely garbed, multi cultural crowd belted out the words of his hymn at a lively pace. I imagined that, having recognized his hymn, he would be amazed yet deeply gratified that people were still employing his labours to the glory of God.

I have visited some very ancient places of worship and had, almost, a feeling of time travel, surrounded and inspired by generations of faithful worshippers, as if the walls were saturated in centuries of prayer and devotion. The technological innovations since their time may have been beyond their imagining, as our future prospects may be beyond ours, but I rejoice that, as for them in their time, our hope is in the Name of the Lord!

Your friend and Minister,

*Jack*



## From the Bible

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

Revelation 21:3-4 (NIV)

**From the Editor** Welcome to the December and January edition of the Hadleigh Messenger. The stained glass image on the front cover comes from Kildare White Abbey in County Kildare, Ireland.

This is yet another late edition but at least I have a genuine excuse this time. I have been soldiering on with an old Dell Vostro PC running Windows XP despite having bought a new Dell Inspiron PC running Windows 8 over a year ago. It has taken me that long to devote the necessary time to make the switch although I did update the new PC to Windows 10 a while back. I was particularly concerned that my large archive of emails would transfer successfully to my new e-mail program Thunderbird. I am now gradually investigating the nooks and crannies of Thunderbird's interface and installing all the programs that I used on the old PC.

You will read elsewhere in the magazine about the 'retirement' of our Minister. I am very grateful for all that Jack has done for the church and for me as Editor of the magazine.

The Covenant Service, which was instigated by Jack and which is normally held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in January, has been postponed until February. This has been necessitated by some rearrangement of the preaching list to cater for a pulpit exchange taking place as part of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

The pulpit exchange takes place on 22<sup>nd</sup> January, when we shall welcome Major David Woodman for the first time (if memory serves correct). David is leader at SA Hadleigh Temple and is also the current leader of Churches Together in Hadleigh, having succeeded Jack. By coincidence, David will also be with us earlier in that week when he gives a talk to the Wives' Fellowship about the 250-mile long Pennine Way.

On Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> January, we welcome back Gillian Thomson from Christ Church Wickford. Sadly, Gillian's husband, Martin, died earlier this year from a brain tumour. Gillian had been training for the ministry at Westminster College but has since taken time out to consider her future. We look forward to seeing Gillian again.

We are grateful to Wilf Tyler for offering to lead our Christmas Day service and the evening service on New Year's Day. We are not expecting too many people at these services so if you are able to join us, you would be especially welcome.

I wish every reader of the Hadleigh Messenger a peaceful Christmas, whether on your own or sharing the company of others. May God's love, which came down to earth in human form two thousand years ago, offer you hope and light for the New Year.

*Malcolm Brown*

## Christmas Nativity Searchword

|                               |            |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| S Q N Y V B E T H L E H E M W | WISE MEN   |
| H Z I H L T L S T R A W M A L | MANGER     |
| K H Y E N C J O E S R A A O S | SHINING    |
| M H G W W P A X M F H G N I H | JESUS      |
| C N O I O D U M D R E C G F I | STRAW      |
| A A N S R V O E K L W S E V N | GODS       |
| M T T E S H O N B Q Y A R M I | WORSHIPPED |
| X I W M H I B A K B K V I M N | BETHLEHEM  |
| A S M E I K T I Z E X I D L G | SAVIOUR    |
| P B R N P S J M C A Y O N A H | MARY       |
| H K X S P N E M A Q P U W G P | JOSEPH     |
| G P A U E G S R G R N R L A S | DONKEY     |
| Z T W F D V U U M O Y V Q B L | STABLE     |
| J O S E P H S V M C D N I I B | ANGEL      |
| W Z S B A B Y P G T Z S V O A | BABY       |
|                               | KING       |

## **Wives' Fellowship Programme for Dec 2016 & Jan 2017**

| <b>Date</b>              | <b>Time</b> | <b>Meeting</b>  |
|--------------------------|-------------|---|
| Tue 6 <sup>th</sup> Dec  | 2.30pm      | Christmas Concert by Hadleigh Male Voice Choir (with Heather Brown on the piano!) |
| Tue 20 <sup>th</sup> Dec | 2.30pm      | Carols & Communion led by Rev. Jack Roche MA                                      |
| Tue 17 <sup>th</sup> Jan | 2.30pm      | Talk on 'The Pennine Way' by Major David Woodman (SA)                             |

Meetings are held in the Small Hall with refreshments served at the end.

Entrance £2.00 – first time free

Small coins collected for Rayleigh, Rochford & Castle Point  
Talking Newspapers for the Blind

**Members of the Wives' Fellowship send Christmas Greetings  
to all readers of the Hadleigh Messenger.**

**Please join us in the New Year if you are able!**

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### **Christmas Celebration – Sun 18<sup>th</sup> Dec @ 5.30pm**

We are again holding one main Christmas event this year – our Christmas Celebration. The service will start at the normal time of 6.30pm but will be preceded by a Christmas Tea in the Small Hall. The tea will start at 5.30pm (later than last year). The service will be led by our Minister.

Please invite family and friends to share in this special Christmas occasion. If you intend to come to the tea, please let Jean Reeve or Heather Brown know, as they are dealing with the catering arrangements.

### **Christmas Day Service – Sun 25<sup>th</sup> Dec @ 10.30am**

This year, Christmas Day falls on a Sunday. However, with a small congregation and several people away or spending the day with family, and with Jack unavailable to lead a service, there was some doubt as to whether it would be viable to hold a service on Christmas morning at the church. The December Church Meeting agreed to go-ahead with a service and Wilf Tyler has kindly agreed to lead it. Please join us if you are able.

### **New Year's Eve Social – Sat 31<sup>st</sup> Dec @ 6.30pm**

It is planned to hold a New Year's Eve Social again this year, commencing at 6.30pm and aiming to finish around 9.00pm. We hope that that as many of our congregation and friends as possible will be able to join us. If anyone would like to come to the social but is concerned about transport to the church and home again, please phone me on 01702 557678.

As usual, we will be having a 'bring and share' supper. A list will be placed on the foyer noticeboard for people to enter their names and the food item(s) being brought. Help would be much appreciated on the night in preparing food items on arrival for the supper table and in serving refreshments, please let Ann Purkiss know if you will be able to help in this way.

Should you have any games, or ideas for games, that would be suitable for the occasion, do please get in touch with Royston Brackin or me. If you would prefer not to take part in some or all of the games, don't be concerned, you will be very welcome to just enjoy watching others if you would prefer.

*Malcolm Brown*

# WHAT'S ON

## A round-up of future events in the area

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Sun 11 Dec 2016 - Mayor's Christmas Carols at the SA Hadleigh Temple starting at 6.00pm. Coffee served from 5.30pm. Free admission with collection for Cancer Research UK.

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Tue 13 Dec 2016 - Coffee Morning & Book Sale at St Peter's Church Hall, Church Road, Thundersley, SS7 3HG. From 10.30am to 12.30pm.

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Wed 14 Dec 2016 - Coffee Morning at St Michael's Church Community Room, St Michael's Road, Daws Heath from 10.00am to 11.45am.

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Sat 17 Dec 2016 - Hadleigh Heritage Centre Coffee Morning with the theme of 'Saxon/Norman Hadleigh, the Church and the Village'. At St James the Less Church from 10.30am to 12 noon. Free event.

ditto - Christmas Jazz Concert by Southend Jazz Co-operative in Haldeigh Old Fire Stadium. Music starts at 7.30pm. Free admission.

ditto - Christmas With Trillogy organised by Friends of Hadleigh Church. With Christmas trios, solos and duets sung by Hilary Pell, Vanessa Cozens and Colleen Elvidge, with accompanist Andrew Palmer. At St James the Less Church starting at 7.30pm. Tickets at the door £9.00, includes mulled wine and mince pies.

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Sun 18 Dec 2016 - Allegro present 'An Evening of Christmas Music' at Thundersley Methodist Church, Kennington Avenue, Thundersley. Starts at 6.30pm. Tickets £10.00 (children free) - to book, phone 01268 755291. Raising funds for local community groups and charities.

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Mon 19 Dec 2016 - Cavs Ways To Wellness - A new project that aims to improve your health and well-being by linking you to activities and opportunities available in your community. At Hadleigh Library from 1.30pm to 3.30pm. No appointment necessary - just pop in.

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Wed 21 Dec 2016 - Thundersley Village Christmas Festival featuring Christmas carols by children from Thundersley Primary School, Kingston Primary School and Montgomerie Primary School. With Santa trail and grotto, The Marian Singers, The Boys Brigade Band, pony rides plus many stalls selling gifts and treats. Strats at 3.00pm.

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Mon 9 Jan 2017 - Benfleet & District Historical Society Illustrated Talk - 'Malta In The Great War' By Bill Fulton at Richmond Hall, off Richmond Avenue, Benfleet. Starts at 8.00pm. Visitors welcome - admission £2.00.

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Sat 14 Jan 2017 - Hadleigh & Thundersley Community Archive Drop-in at Hadleigh Library from 10.30am to 12 noon.

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Sat 21 Jan 2017 - Hadleigh Heritage Centre Illustrated Talk on 'Saxon & Norman Hadleigh' by Rev. David Childs. At St James the Less from 10.30am to 12 noon. Free entry.

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Fri 27 Jan 2017 - An Evening Of Bollywood organised by the Rotary Club of Hadleigh Castle to celebrate 100 years of the Rotary Foundation. With full buffet, plus Bollywood dance workshop and disco. At The Tandoori Parlour, 61-63 Hart Road, Thundersley, Starts at 7.30pm. Tickets £19.00 - to book, or for more info, phone Perrie on 07890 596348.

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More events listed on the HELIX website at <http://www.hadleighsex.info>.



# Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2017

A Prayer Octave for Christian Unity was first celebrated from 18<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> January 1908. In 1968, churches and parishes around the world received for the first time material for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The 2017 material was prepared for worldwide use by the Christians of Germany and adapted by Churches Together in Britain & Ireland (CTBI). It is based around 2 Corinthians 5:14-20:

*“For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God.”*  
– 2 Corinthians 5: 14-20 (NIV)

## Background

There are fifty million Christians in Germany who, traditionally, have mostly belonged to the Roman Catholic Church or one of the Protestant State Churches. Recent developments, particularly the reception of refugees and asylum seekers, have begun to change this balance and other Christian traditions are finding expression.

Whilst that which unites the churches is stronger than that which divides, there are still areas of difference in which the churches remain self-absorbed or construct new walls. As the churches in Germany discerned how to commemorate the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Luther making public his 95 theses, a way was sought whereby they could stand together.

After extensive discussions, the churches agreed to commemorate this reformation event with a Christustfest - a celebration of Christ. The churches of Germany found inspiration in *Evangelii Gaudium*, the Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis, which encourages acts of

repentance and reconciliation, because ‘the Love of Christ compels us’ (2 Corinthians 5:14).

The text from 2 Corinthians announces that God has, in Christ, reconciled the world to himself. The love of Christ compels us to be ambassadors of this reconciliation. This calls for a moment of repentance before we draw from the well of forgiveness. Such repentance acknowledges schism and division, names the reasons and acknowledges the walls of human sinfulness.

Reconciliation is enacted by dismantling the walls. Those who have been reconciled in Christ are called, in turn, to proclaim this reconciliation, in word and deed, to all the world. The world needs ambassadors of reconciliation who will break down walls, build bridges and open doors to new ways of life.

Being such ambassadors requires the churches to offer concrete acts alongside our prayers. The world stands in the midst of a refugee crisis. Tangible acts of help are just as necessary as praying together, in order to offer those who are fleeing their terrible situations some hope and consolation. God gives hope even in the most hopeless of situations.

With the fall of the Berlin Wall, Germany experienced how a seemingly insurmountable wall could be brought down. The fall of this wall is a symbol of hope that, with the love of God, nothing is impossible.

This 2017 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity gives voice to the desire for a celebration of the love of Christ as a means and motive for reconciliation.

## Local observance

In 2017, the meetings in Hadleigh will follow the official Octave dates though there is not a meeting on every day of the Octave. CTBI resources are downloadable from the CTBI website at <http://www.ctbi.org.uk>. Refreshments will be served for 15 minutes before the start of each meeting.

The week includes a pulpit exchange on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> January and we will welcome Major David Woodman from the Salvation Army Hadleigh Temple. A united service will be held on the same day at the SA Temple. For details of the meetings, please see the page for January preaching arrangements and duty rotas.

## From the Moderator's Blog

### Sleeping rough and meeting Steve Baker – a post by Alan Yates from 28<sup>th</sup> Nov 2016

On Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November, Kate and I took part in the Wycombe Homeless Connection (WHC) big sleep-out in the All Saints graveyard in the centre of High Wycombe.

There were three key aims for this event: to raise awareness of homelessness and rough sleeping, to raise money for WHC so that they can better support the homeless in Wycombe and to give us a taste of what it is like to be homeless. To ensure we do get a real taste the organisers seem to be able to pick a cold night, and that Friday was no exception – it was well below freezing.

When the WHC night shelter is running I quite often help at the breakfast shift which has enabled me to talk with many of the homeless guests. I'm usually struck how 'normal' these folk are; they are not feckless scroungers.

They often remind me of myself when in the 1980s I had a period when I was finding it really difficult to pay the mortgage. I had just taken on a large mortgage (but only three times my income); my wife had just stopped working because of our first child and interest rates climbed to 15%!

And so it is with our guests; it is often not one thing but the collision of a number of things. Each on their own can be handled, but put together they become almost insurmountable – and this is where WHC comes in.



**Kate and Alan's home for the night**

So, at 8:15pm on Friday night I left home with the cardboard, plastic and sleeping bags in the boot. At 8:45 I started to erect our home for the night. I only used materials that someone could get free or very cheaply. I built two 'coffin-sized' structures (rather appropriate for sleeping in a graveyard!), each from two washing machine boxes taped end to end.

I wrapped the boxes with very cheap plastic sheeting in an attempt to make them somewhat waterproof. I fabricated two 'mattresses' from

bubble wrap covered in cardboard; underneath our mattresses I placed a very thin piece of foam rubber. On top of this we placed two cheap sleeping bags.



**Alan bedding down for the night**

After a cup of tea in the church we all retired to our cardboard palaces! We closed the 'front door' and tried to settle down to a good night's sleep. Although the cardboard and plastic did insulate us from the worst of the weather it did not isolate us from the noise. The pub opposite had a disco, a very loud disco, that went on to 4:30 in the morning! I finally got off to sleep at about 5, only to be woken up at 5:45 so that we could clear up, have some breakfast and be off site by 7am.

Overall, I think we did meet our objectives. So far £45,000 has been collected, and WHC expect quite a bit more to be handed in – Kate and I have collected about £1,400 in sponsorship – it's not too late if you want to support us <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/AlanYates>.

On Tuesday Rachel Lampard (Methodist VP of Conference) and I met with Steve Baker, the Conservative MP for High Wycombe.



**Steve Baker MP & Rachel Lampard**

He contacted us after we offered to meet with MPs at the Conservative Party conference. He did not have time at the conference so he asked us to come and see him separately. Coincidentally, I have met Steve before because he also has served on the breakfast shift at the WHC night shelter.

It was great to talk with a politician who tested his calling to be an MP by getting on to his knees to pray! Steve is a committed Christian who regularly attends church in one of the villages close to High Wycombe.

Steve was a prominent Brexiteer, so I was rather relieved to hear that he too was dismayed by some of the misleading sound bites used in the campaign (both Remain and Brexit). He did share with us a number of occasions when the press had distorted his message.

We talked about homelessness, refugees, poverty and the role of the bible in politics. You'll notice in the photograph that he is holding his well-used bible. Whether we agree with all the Conservative policies we must thank the Lord that we have such God fearing men and women in politics today. Before we left Rachel and I prayed for Steve and his work, and I ask you to do the same.

Yours in Christ,

*Alan*

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## Southend Winter Night Shelter

The Southend Winter Night shelter re-opened on 1 December 2016, giving food and lodging to homeless persons over the winter months. The scheme, operated in partnership with HARP, Southend's homeless charity, involves churches from all over Southend providing shelter for homeless persons on specified nights.

Under the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP), Southend Borough Council (SBC) has a statutory obligation to provide shelter from the elements for all Southend-based rough sleepers when the temperature is forecast to be below 0°C for 3 consecutive nights.

In the past, they were able to do this with the help of e.g. HARP and by using local hostels, hotels and B&Bs. But in the late summer of 2011 the churches in Southend (through Love Southend) were approached to see if any church buildings could be made available during the winter months.

Seven churches now provide shelter until 31<sup>st</sup> March, on different nights of the week, adding up to 20 extra beds to the 18 night shelter rooms available at HARP all year round. Last year, over a third of people that visited the night shelters went on to be offered housing by HARP, the council and other agencies by springtime.

This year, the partnership aims to better this by empowering guests to work on any issues that might have led to them becoming homeless. Working with a HARP team member, they will

create and work through a personalised action plan towards achievable goals.


The partnership encourages any person that has become homeless or is at risk of homelessness to go to HARP's Bradbury Centre located on York Road, a warm and safe place for them to recover from the harsh reality of living on the streets. A team member from HARP will discuss their situation and they will then be offered accommodation, depending on their needs and what is available.

One of the churches involved this year is a consortium of Methodist churches (Highlands, Wesley, Chalkwell, United Methodist Church, Hockley and Rayleigh) who will offer hospitality every Saturday at the Methodist church building in Whittingham Avenue. Other churches include Avenue Baptist Church, Ferndale Baptist Church and Southend Christian Fellowship.

Volunteers are always welcome, whether to provide catering skills for dinner and breakfast, befriending or overnight supervision. Volunteers are particularly needed for Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. If you can help or have any questions, please contact John Simmons (the Shelter Co-Coordinator) on 07866 740065, or by e-mail to [john.simmons17ewb@btinternet.com](mailto:john.simmons17ewb@btinternet.com)

Donations of suitable food and appropriate clothing are also welcome and can be made through HARP.

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At the end of life we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have received, how much money we have made, how many great things we have done. We will be judged by "I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was naked and you clothed me. I was homeless, and you took me in." – *Mother Teresa*

## Prayer Reflection

January takes its name from the Roman God Janus, the doorkeeper, represented with faces back and front, symbolically looking back at the old year and forward to the new. For the Romans, that year began, officially, on March 1<sup>st</sup> (which is the reason why December – Latin ‘tenth’ – is our twelfth month!)

A new year has all of us looking both ways. Backwards, we look over a landscape of ups and downs with high points of celebration and happiness and low troughs of sadness and loss. Forwards, we are looking into the unknown, the unpredictable mystery of the future. It has been said that life is lived forwards but understood backwards so the New Year is an appropriate occasion for the old hymn; ‘How good is the God we adore’, with its final verse:

*‘Tis Jesus the First and the Last, whose Spirit shall guide us safe home.*

*We’ll praise Him for all that is past, and trust Him for all that’s to come.*

Remember in prayer Christians who will be celebrating Christmas in fear because, as a minority faith, their celebration can attract opposition and sometimes violent attacks. This is also the case with New Year, which is frequently taken to be a Christian festival.

As part of a monthly prayer rota for our congregation and wider fellowship, please pray for Janet Wimbledon, Daphne Lockwood (and daughter Karen who is undergoing breast cancer treatment) and Jean Parnell.

*Rev. Jack Roche*

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## A Prayer for Christmas Morning by Henry van Dyke

The day of joy returns, Father in Heaven, and crowns another year with peace and goodwill.

Help us rightly to remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men.

Close the doors of hate and open the doors 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 that Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clean hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and the Christmas evening bring us to our bed with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus’ sake.

**Amen**

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# No room at the inn?

A reflection by Christian Aid for December 2016

These words from the Gospel of Luke are familiar to many of us at this time of year, often heard in the warm glow of carols by candlelight, evoking memories of tea-towel nativity plays:

*'In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered.'* (Luke 2:1-3)

However, this year these words carry a stranger echo, not only for 'those days' but also in these days. Registration of all the world in those days symbolised life in the Roman Empire.

Registration was for the purpose of taxation. As theologian Ron Allen has observed, 'In a bitter irony, by paying taxes to Rome, the residents of Judea, Samaria, and Galilee would pay for the oppression and violence visited upon them by Rome.' The command to return 'to their own towns to be registered' coming from a Syrian governor takes on a different irony in these days.

The current registration of those seeking refuge from Syria, and other countries immersed in protracted conflict, is a means to monitor and control the movement of people. It is also a means to decide whether to provide refuge. And too often there is still no room at the inn.

This Christmas, Christian Aid is telling the story of not only those seeking refuge beyond their borders, but also those who do so within. Some 65 million people across the world are in search of a safe place to call home. Many are seeking safety within their own country as **internally displaced people**, because there is no place for them in their own home.

## Angelique's story

Angelique was forced from her home and all that was secure in her life.



Captured from her house in a small village in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Angelique was repeatedly raped by

armed men. But that was nowhere near the end of her ordeal. Because she had been raped, her husband rejected her. Angelique was homeless and abandoned to darkness. There is much need to light the way for people like Angelique this Christmas.

## Good news

And as we rest our eyes on the bundle of hope in the manger, and witness those who visited first, we get to see again who this good news was and is for, first and foremost.

It wasn't to the Roman Emperor or to the King that news of this divine baby was heralded. It was to the lowly shepherds watching their flocks by night that news first came. Shepherds who hadn't gone anywhere to be registered, whose home was sleeping with sheep in a field.

With the heralding of the baby's first cry we already begin to see the fulfilment of Mary's song from Luke 1. This is good news, first and foremost for the poor, the stranger and the lowly.

And everywhere that the poor, the stranger and the lowly are included, welcomed and respected, Mary's song is still being sung. This hope in swaddling bands 'brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly'. And that is good news indeed.

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## World Leprosy Day - Sunday 29 January 2017



THE LEPROSY  
MISSION

For over 60 years, on the last Sunday of January, people around the world have observed World Leprosy Day by remembering and praying for those living with the terrible effects of leprosy. World Leprosy Day was the idea of the French humanitarian, Raoul Follereau, who dedicated many years to fundraising and helping those affected by leprosy.

Initially, this day of prayer was to achieve two things. Firstly, Follereau believed that those affected by leprosy should receive the same respect, dignity and quality of care as any other patient. Secondly, he wanted greater awareness of the disease in order to change attitudes and to reduce stigma. 60 years later, those are still the objectives of World Leprosy Day.

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## Computer Corner

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### **XYplorer (and a bit of history)**

I have never been enamoured with using Windows Explorer (File Explorer in Windows 10) for managing my vast array of computer files. I have been a long term user of the Ztree file management program with its keyboard-friendly, 'dual-pane' interface (where the source and target folders of move and copy operations are visible at the same time).

Ztree has its roots in the DOS (Disk Operating System) era, i.e. pre-Windows, and, unfortunately, its design dates from that time, which puts most people off. The design is deliberate as it mirrors the DOS file manager named Xtree, which was the biggest selling program in the world at the time. The arrival of Xtree in the era of the command line interface of DOS (where commands are typed in a line at a time) was a revelation. Ztree is one of the few paid-for programs on my PC (it costs about £25) and I could not function digitally without it.

I do occasionally look at other free file managers and XYplorer is one that has come to my attention recently. There is a paid-for version but the free version will cater for most people's needs. To quote the website blurb: "XYplorer is a file manager for Windows. It features tabbed browsing, a powerful file search, a versatile preview, a highly customizable interface, optional dual pane, and a large array of unique ways to efficiently automate frequently recurring tasks. It's fast, light, and portable."

Download from <https://www.xyplorer.com>

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## CHURCH DIARY FOR JANUARY 2017

| DAY                        | TIME                                     | EVENT   |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup>     | 10.30am<br>6.30pm                        | Morning Service – Rev. Jack Roche MA<br>Evening Service with Holy Communion – Mr Wilf Tyler                     |
| Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup>     | 8.00pm (TBC)                             | Ladies Recreation Group   |
| Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup>    | No session - holiday                     | Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots   |
| Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup>   | 10.30am - 12 noon                        | Coffee Morning - refreshments served until 11.45am  |
| Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup>     | 10.30am                                  | Morning Service – Rev. Dr. Jim Tarrant  |
| Monday 9 <sup>th</sup>     | 8.00pm                                   | Ladies Recreation Group   |
| Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup>   | 9.30am - 11.00am                         | Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots   |
| Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> | 7.30pm                                   | ELDERS' MEETING   |
| Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup>  | 10.30am - 12 noon<br>12.00 noon - 1.30pm | Coffee Morning - refreshments served until 11.45am<br>LifeBuilders and prayer time - starting with packed lunch |
| Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup>    | 10.30am                                  | Morning Service with Holy Communion – Mrs Gillian Thomson   |
| Monday 16 <sup>th</sup>    | 8.00pm                                   | Ladies Recreation Group   |
| Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup>   | 9.30am - 11.00am<br>2.30pm               | Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots<br>Wives' Fellowship – Major David Woodman<br>Talk on 'The Pennine Way' |
| Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup>  | 10.30am - 12 noon                        | Coffee Morning with bric-a-brac table for Christian Aid   |
| Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup>    | 10.30am                                  | Morning Service – Major David Woodman<br>Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Pulpit Exchange                     |
| Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup>    | 8.00pm                                   | Ladies Recreation Group   |
| Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup>   | 9.30am - 11.00am                         | Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots   |
| Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup>  | 10.30am<br>12.30pm                       | Monthly Midweek Service – Heather Brown<br>CHURCH MEETING (one week later than usual)                           |
| Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup>    | 10.30am                                  | Morning Service – Rev. Derek Kingston   |
| Monday 30 <sup>th</sup>    | 8.00pm                                   | Ladies Recreation Group   |
| Tuesday 31 <sup>st</sup>   | 9.30am - 11.00am                         | Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots   |

### Step lightly through the coming year

Step lightly through the coming year whatever it may bring.  
 Have courage in the winter storms and reach out to the Spring.  
 And catch the sunshine when you can, it lifts the heart and mind,  
 Be cheerful in the darker days though life may seem unkind.  
 Step bravely when the road is steep and climb the highest hill,  
 Then looking up towards the stars, your hopes and dreams fulfill.  
 Still cherish faith, and love and joy, dispelling doubt and fear,  
 Tomorrow beckons, look ahead, step lightly through the year!

*Iris Hesselden*

## CHURCH DIARY FOR DECEMBER 2016

| DAY                       | TIME                                  | EVENT   |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup>  | 10.30am - 12 noon                     | Coffee Morning - refreshments served until 11.45am  |
| Saturday 3 <sup>rd</sup>  | 8.30am - 10.00am                      | Men's Breakfast Meeting   |
| Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup>    | 10.30am<br>6.30pm                     | Morning Service - Rev. Jack Roche MA<br>Evening Service with Holy Communion - Mr Jim Clubb  |
| Monday 5 <sup>th</sup>    | 8.00pm                                | Ladies Recreation Group   |
| Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup>   | 9.30am - 11.00am<br>2.30pm            | Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots<br>Wives' Fellowship - Christmas Concert<br>by Hadleigh Male Voice Choir                            |
| Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup> | 7.30pm                                | ELDERS' MEETING   |
| Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup>  | 10.30am - 12 noon<br>12 noon - 1.30pm | Coffee Morning - refreshments served until 11.45am<br>LifeBuilders and prayer time - starting with packed lunch                             |
| Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup>   | 10.30am                               | Morning Service - Rev. John Ambrose   |
| Monday 12 <sup>th</sup>   | 8.00pm                                | Ladies Recreation Group   |
| Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup>  | 9.30am - 11.00am                      | Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots   |
| Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> | 10.30am - 12 noon                     | Coffee Morning with bric-a-brac table for Christian Aid   |
| Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup>   | 10.30am<br>5.30pm<br>6.30pm           | Morning Service with Holy Communion - Rev. Jack Roche MA<br>Christmas Celebration Tea<br>Christmas Celebration Service - Rev. Jack Roche MA |
| Monday 19 <sup>th</sup>   | 8.00pm                                | Ladies Recreation Group   |
| Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup>  | No session - holiday<br>2.30pm        | Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots<br>Wives' Fellowship - Carols & Communion<br>led by Rev. Jack Roche MA                              |
| Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup> | 10.30am                               | Christmas Midweek Service - Rev. Jack Roche MA  |
| Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup>   | 10.30am                               | Christmas Day Service - Mr Wilf Tyler   |
| Monday 26 <sup>th</sup>   | No session - holiday                  | Ladies Recreation Group   |
| Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup>  | No session - holiday                  | Alphabet Club for Parents/Carers & Tots   |
| Thursday 29 <sup>th</sup> | 10.30am - 12 noon                     | Coffee Morning - refreshments served until 11.45am  |
| Saturday 31 <sup>st</sup> | 18.30                                 | New Year's Eve Social   |

### What to give this Christmas

To your enemy... forgiveness,  
 To your opponent... tolerance.  
 To a friend... heart.  
 To a customer... service.  
 To all men... charity.  
 To every child... a good example.  
 To yourself... respect.

*Author unknown*