

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON METHODIST CHURCH

R E P O R T I N G

JANUARY 2017



Join us for a
Souper-Lunch

WESLEY HALL

Stratford Methodist Church Centre

Saturday 4th February 2017

10.30 - 1.00pm

Tea/coffee & biscuits also available



Cakes & Preserves



Handmade crafts

As new Gifts & Bric-a-Brac

Books & more

Proceeds for Church Funds



Dear Friends

Thank you to everyone who contributed to all the extra events and services in the Advent and Christmas season. It was something of a marathon at times but hopefully the memory we are left with are the moments of glory we witnessed.

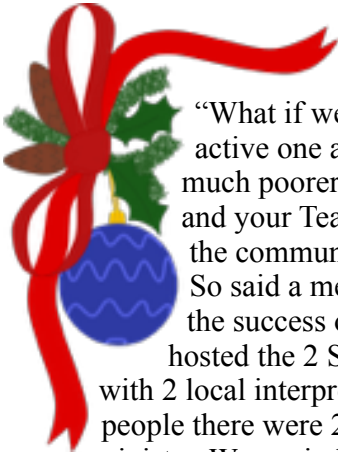
One such moment for me was walking into the Wesley Hall as some 70 people gathered for the Christmas lunch. Some were from church, some had brought their neighbours or relatives. There were people from other other churches in Stratford and visitors from South Korea and China. There were rough sleepers and people who had found out about the meal through various agencies such as C.A.B.. The two families from Syria newly arrived in Stratford were there and people formerly from Iran who came to help with translation.

I found the wonderful mix of nationalities, languages, ages, faiths and personal circumstances all sitting together at peace for the table fellowship of a Christmas meal glorious and felt the brush of angel wings as the volunteers moved about swiftly serving tables.

Glorious too was the generosity of various shops, individuals and agencies such that there was more than enough in terms of helpers, food, and gifts and no charge was made or donation asked for from those who gathered for the meal.

Thank you to everyone who helped with Christmas meal and in particular to Sheila Brown for deciding to arrange and host the event. The life of God was present in the welcome, variety of people, generosity, conversation and laughter at the tables, abundance of help, food and gifts and gracious offer of service by those who helped. The glory of the Lord shone all around.

With thanks
Audrey



Christmas Day Lunch – report from Evelyn Ho

“What if we didn’t have a Methodist church, and an active one at that, in town?! The mind boggles, how much poorer we all would be. A huge thank you to you and your Team of Methodists who do so much good for the community (and worldwide),”

So said a member of the Welcome Here Group following the success of our special Christmas Day Lunch when we hosted the 2 Syrian families who are now living in Stratford with 2 local interpreters plus nearly 70 other guests. Besides local people there were 2 Korean families and a visiting Chinese minister. We are indebted to Sheila Brown for taking on the responsibility of this event. She had a wonderful team of helpers on the day and a team working on Christmas Eve getting the hall ready and preparing the food.

However, another factor creating such a successful event was the involvement of the RSC. Fortunately a rep from the Theatre has attended the Welcome Here meetings and he organised the Welcome Tea Party for the Syrian families at the Other Place on 14 December. He advertised the Christmas Day Lunch to his RSC colleagues with the result that the RSC, as well as Tesco and Morrisons, provided funds for the catering so that all costs were covered. Guests still wanted to make a donation and I received £106 for the Welcome Here Fund.

RSC staff made a collection to buy very generous presents for Father Christmas to give to the children and sweets and biscuits for the adults. To see the smiles on the faces of the 4 Syrian children as they opened their presents was very heart-warming. The adults too were so appreciative.

There was a wonderful team of helpers, including Adam Hollowell who was busy taking photos as well as serving. The RSC helpers with the help of Kath Marriott on the piano got us singing some carols and awarded the winning table for the quiz. Another great contribution made by the RSC was to enable us to stream the Queen’s Speech in the church at 4pm. This brought to a conclusion a memorable Christmas Day celebration.



Forward Planning

The Community Action Team (CAT for short) will meet on Tuesday, Jan. 10th at 10am to put the finishing arrangements to the Souper-Lunch which will be on February 4th. Any contributions to the stalls as listed on the front cover together with new unwanted Christmas gifts, can be left in the Welcome area over the next 3 weeks. The book stall will make another appearance so any books read since Christmas are welcome. There will be the opportunity to have soup & a roll from 12 noon at £2 for adults and £1 for children. Coffee/tea will be available any time for a donation. Any other details will be published in the Sunday leaflet after the meeting.



Further stalls will be made up at the time depending on what we are given to sell. Cakes, preserves and chocolates would be good to have

**Anyone willing to help on the day,
please ring Maureen on S/A 299347.**

OBD – Questions, Beliefs, Doubts?

Our QBD group is re-assembling on Monday 16 January at 7.30pm in the Church Lounge. Rev Ros Murphy will lead a discussion on chapter 9 of Marcus Borg's book, Speaking Christian, which is about Easter. If you wish to engage your heart with your brain you are very welcome to join us.

We will meet fortnightly for a total of 6 sessions – 30 January, 13 & 27 February and 13 & 27 March.

Lim & Evelyn Ho

The Card Group resumes on Monday 9th January 2017 10.00 - 12.00 and we would be delighted to see anyone who wishes to make a greetings card for a family member or friend, or donate to sell for Church funds. We are always grateful for card making materials of any description - please drop in at Card Corner in Church. We would like to thank everyone who has bought a card during the year.

Thank you - Penny Brain

SNIPPETS AND REMINDERS

CHURCH CHRISTMAS CARD raised an amount of £363.50 for General Church Funds

AVONSIDE PLAYERS ARE STILL WORKING THOUGH NOT ACTING. We have over the coming months to clear and dispose of the furniture, costumes and props collected over the company's existence. We will be announcing a date of a sale of some items. Others will go to the tip and still more shared with friendly groups who have helped us. Watch out for the sale. There are some interesting items in our store. *****In the meantime, the regular annual quiz arranged by Maureen and Keith Beckett will take place on January 9th at 7.30pm. It is an open evening for all friends and much fun is always had. Do come and join in the fun. We would like to see it become a regular church feature when we no longer exist.

Action for Children An enormous thank you to all who came and joined us carol singing by the Royal Shakespeare Theatre on the evening of Friday 16th. It is so much easier to sing with a goodly number. The fantastic sum of £197.74 was raised. Gill Bowers.

Women's World Day of Prayer is on **March 3rd** here in our church. It is prepared by the women of the Philippines and entitled 'Am I Being Unfair to You?' More information next month.

Singing Spirits restarts on **Thursday Jan 12th at 4pm**. If you know any young folk of **Primary/Junior School** age who might be interested, please tell them about it.

Maureen Beckett is giving her talk on working with **Stratford's Canada Geese** on **January 14th at 3.30pm**. She says just turn up – it's free + tea and biscuits afterwards. There will be a second talk on **Feb 11th - See Back Page**.



The first SING meeting for this year is on Monday January 30th at the usual time of 12 o'clock, always the last Monday of the month in the Church. You can have soup and tea/coffee after at 50p plus free chat with friends

Over the past year we have looked at new hymns in Singing the Faith - some we liked, some were easy to sing and some more difficult. This month we are going to look at the hymns in the section called '*Our Journey With God*' numbers 455 - 488.

At least 25 of those are really well known so come and share a sing-a-long together.

Are you ready for your Spring Garden

PLANT THREE ROWS OF PEAS:

Peace of mind: Peace of heart: Peace of soul.

PLANT FOUR ROWS OF SQUASH:

Squash gossip: Squash indifference:
Squash grumbling: Squash selfishness.

PLANT FOUR ROWS OF LETTUCE:

Lettuce be faithful: Lettuce be kind:
Lettuce be patient; Lettuce really love one another.

NO GARDEN IS WITHOUT TURNIPS:

Turnip for meetings: Turnip for service: Turnip to help one another.

TO CONCLUDE OUR GARDEN, WE MUST HAVE THYME:

Thyme for each other: Thyme for family: Thyme for friends.

Water freely with patience and cultivate with love. There is much fruit in your garden because you reap what you sow.

~Unknown

Christmastime

When all the parcels are opened
and the cards have been read with care,
When the tinsel and holly and Christmas-tree
of attention have had their share;
When you stand and look at your loved ones,
and know you are really well blessed,
Will you think for a while of the wooden crib
where Jesus was laid to rest?

Will you think of the road that He travelled for you
down from the glory above;
Will you try to comprehend the breadth
and all the depth of His love
That brought Him to share the humble home
and to labour with hand and heart.
That you might know in His Father's plan
you have always a vital part?

It's not in vain, the tinsel and gold,
if within our hearts we hold
The wonder of love that Christ's coming to earth
can to all the world be told.
Our hearts will throb to a note of joy
as we look at the crib and see
The Master of Heaven who came to earth
for love of you and me
Mary Parr from 'My Joy at Christmas'

An advance notice for you diary

**Synod is booked to meet at our church on Thursday March 16th.
I am sure nearer the time, there will be requests for help on the day.
Why not note it in your diary now.**



The Green Corner



Last month, we were set a quiz by Brenda Birnie. I hope some people actually did it as quite a lot of thought often goes into the articles which appear month by month. The answers are below and this month's article is about cars!

1. Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed.. .Lilies in the field
2. Sounds as if it might be used to sweep the floor....Broom
3. A feeling of regret in a French street.. Rue
4. Spice that sounds like an invitation.... Cummin
5. An extremely keen condiment... Mustard
6. Regarded as a vampire repellent... Garlic
7. When reversed it might eat into your furniture.. Wormwood
8. Result of a hole in your bucket.... Leek
9. Sound made by a snake suffering from singultus Hyssop
10. Played on at Wimbledon..... Grass

Environmentally friendly cars:

For Green Corner this month I wanted to cut through some of the jargon concerning more environmentally friendly cars which are now becoming more common, a trend which is set to only increase further. As car manufactures look to reduce the carbon impact of the vehicles they sell (driven by legislation) more and more vehicles with alternative power options are available on the market:

Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV)

Battery powered. Likely range anywhere from 80 to around 300 miles (vehicle dependant). Battery charging time from 20 minutes to approximately 7 hours (depending on the type of charger & battery size). Zero carbon emissions when driving.

Range extender Electric Vehicle (Rex EV)

A Battery Electric Vehicle (as described above) but with an additional engine which acts as a generator to charge the battery to extend range if a recharging facility is not available. Zero carbon emissions when running on battery only.

Hybrid Electric Vehicle (HEV)

Powered by both an internal combustion engine (petrol or diesel) and an electric motor. Some makes at low speeds can be battery powered only. At higher speed surplus power from engine recharges the battery. Minimal battery only range of 1-2 miles. Lower carbon emissions than regular petrol / diesel cars.

Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle (PHEV)

Has a larger battery than a HEV which can be charged from an external source. Realistic battery only range of 15+ miles. Zero carbon emissions when running on battery only.

Hydrogen - Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle (H-FCEV)

This is the most recent technology to come to market. Hydrogen gas is used to power an electric motor. Range of 300+ miles. Zero carbon emissions when driving. The biggest drawback at present is a very limited hydrogen filling station network.

Electric Vehicles are now an increasingly viable option, and government grants are still available for cars which have a zero carbon emissions range of at least 10 miles (which presently accounts for more than 30 models and more to come during 2017).

There are currently over 4000 public EV charging points in the UK, with 17 in Stratford-upon-Avon, and by 2020 it is expected that they will outnumber petrol stations.

David Cooke

While driving in Pennsylvania, a family caught up to an Amish carriage. The owner of the carriage obviously had a sense of humour, because attached to the back of the carriage was a hand-printed sign:

‘Energy-efficient vehicle. Runs on oats and grass.

Caution; do not step in exhaust.’

STEWARDS FOR FEBRUARY

5TH OLLIE EVANS
DAN EVANS

12TH DAVID DUMPER
GILLIAN PICKLES

19TH LIZ WALKER
ROSEMARY CORVIN

26TH VINCENT GLADWIN
LILIAN FITTON

FLOWER ROTA

FEBRUARY 5TH -
IVY CALVERT

FEBRUARY 12TH -
KATH FRASER

FEBRUARY 19TH -
MAUREEN NESBIT

FEBRUARY 26TH-
PENELOPE HAND



COFFEE ROTA FOR FEBRUARY

5th Gillian Ledgard and Ray Childerhouse

12th Jacky May and Liz Walker

19th Brenda Birnie and Marilyn Shorey

22nd Jane Rowley and Gillian Pickles

JANUARY OFFERTORY ROTA

JAN 1ST
JAN 8TH
JAN 15TH
JAN 22ND
JAN 29TH

MARGARET SMITH
MARGARET FARMERY
MICHAEL LEDGARD
GILLIAN EDWARDS
DAVID DUMPER

STEVE FARMERY
GILLIAN BOWERS
BILL GILES
BARBARA HAGGETT
MALCOLM SMITH

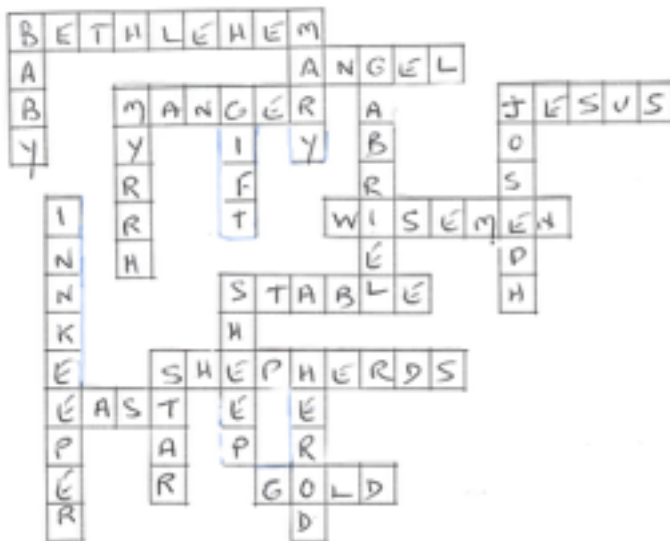


*To EVERYONE with a Birthday in JANUARY you
are wished a very happy birthday especially*

SHEILA BROWN AND MARGARET SMITH

If you would like your birthday included in Reporting, please let Sheila Giles know. I do not have the names of any birthdays in February...

Christmas Fill-in Puzzle Answers



Three Kings from Persian lands afar
To Jordan follow the pointing star;
And this is the quest of the travellers three,
Where the new born king of the Jews may be
Full royal gifts they bear for the King;
Gold, incense myrrh are their offering.

The star shines out with a steadfast ray;
The Kings to Bethlehem make their way;
And there in worship they bend the knee,
As Mary's child in her lap they see;
Their royal gifts they bear for the King;
Gold, incense, myrrh are their offering.

Thou child of man - lo, to Bethlehem
The Kings are travelling - travel with them!
The star of mercy, the star of grace
Shall lead thy heart to its resting place.
Gold, incense, myrrh thou canst not bring;
Offer thy heart to the infant King, Offer thy heart

The best way to hear this poem is set to music by Peter Cornelius with a Bach chorale sung under it. Just magical.

FEBRUARY 2017 DIARY DATES

- 4th Souper-Lunch – see Page 1 and 4
7th 10.00 Holy Communion in the Church
11th 10.00-12 noon Brunch
3.30 Maureen’s Talk ‘Meeting my Sister’
12th 3.00-5.00 Youphonix!
14th MWB Lunch in the New Room
26th 3.00-5.00 Youphonix!
27th SING-at 12 noon (see page 6)
27th 2.30pm Men’s Meeting Point: Rev Jim Dobson ‘Canal Boating’
28th 7.30pm Everywomans

WEEKLY MEETINGS

- Sunday: 10.30am Morning Worship then a cuppa
Monday: 10.00-12.00 noon Monday Makers
10.00-12.00 noon Card Making
2.30pm Bible Group
Tuesday: 10.00-12.00am Knit, Stitch and Natter
10.00am Prayer Group
Wednesday: 9.30-11.30 Wesleys Baby and Toddler Group
Thursday: 3.30 – 4.45 Singing Spirits
Friday: 9.30-11.30 Wesleys Baby and Toddler Group
2.00pm Cake and Company

Plus the opportunity to drop in for a cuppa any morning at church

Items for February’s Reporting are needed by **Sunday January 29th.**
by Sheila Giles S/A 296789 or e.mail to

sdgreporting@mypostoffice.co.uk

I believe that nothing in life is unimportant – that every moment can be a beginning, and is a time for decision taken against the constant background of one’s faith.

Each word and gesture, whether it comes from strength or weakness, may change the subsequent course of our life, or the life of those around us.

Roger Bannister