

# IN TOUCH

D E C E M B E R      2 0 2 5      &  
J A N U A R Y      2 0 2 6

**Gifted  
2025**

**Around the  
Circuit**

**Advent &  
Christmas**



The **Methodist Church**  
Herefordshire (South & East) **Circuit**

Dear Friends,

As we move towards Christmas 2025, we travel through Advent. Each Advent and Lent, The Methodist Church Evangelism and Growth Team prepare resources for us, that are linked to national advertising on many of the social media platforms,

This year, we are following the Advent Theme of “Gifted 2025” in each of our churches.

This Advent and Christmas season, the Methodist Church invites you to join ‘Gifted’ with resources to support your worship, welcome, and witness – including service outlines, small group materials, outreach ideas, posters, postcards, digital assets and a daily email.

Gifted is a message of good news to a weary world...

**You are a gift. Made with love.**

Together, all districts, circuits, local churches and fellowships of the Methodist Church are invited to remind people of their inherent worth and beauty – not because of what they’ve done, or what they can give – but because of who they are.

Gifted:

- is for everyone in our churches and beyond: both believers rejoicing at God’s gift of Jesus, and those who might find the season more wearying than wonderful.
- reaches out to people longing for transformation but feeling stuck. For those searching for something more, something real – but unsure where to look.

Gifted is the Methodist Church's open invitation, speaking the good news to people that they matter. That they are Beloved. Created with infinite care. A gift to the world, just as they are.

Christmas is one of the richest opportunities we have to connect with people who might not usually come to church and who may be open to hearing something of the good news through the story we tell at Christmas.

Each week, look out for the weekly theme, an old testament reading, a new testament, and an object. The table overleaf shows each week.

Date	Weekly theme	Old Testament	Gospel	Object
30 Nov	You are a Gift	Psalm 122	Matthew 24:36–44	
7 Dec	The Orange in the Stocking	Psalm 72:1–7, 18–19	Matthew 3:1–12	
14 Dec	Give Hope	Psalm 146:5–10	Matthew 11:2–11	
21 Dec	With love from God	Psalm 80:1–7, 17–19	Matthew 1:18–25	
25 Dec	The Best Gift	Psalm 97	Luke 2:1–20	
28 Dec	Handle with Care	Psalm 148	Matthew 2:13–23	
4 Jan	Created with Infinite Care	Psalm 147:12–20	John 1:10–18	
6 Jan	The Gift that Keeps on Giving	Psalm 72:1–7, 10–14	Matthew 2:1–12	

We do hope that everyone gets an opportunity to gain something from the resources, and if you want to find out more, take a look at them on the web:-  
<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/christmasresources/>

You can also sign up there for the daily emails, and look at the small group resources.

Caroline and I hope that you have a wonderful Christmas and a Blessed New Year.

*Phil*

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## Around the Circuit & District

### District & Circuit News

As I type this, we are preparing for the circuit visit by our new Co-Chair Revd Rachel Deigh, This visit is her catching up with the Circuit Stewards, the reps to Synod and the Superintendent. She is coming to find out about our circuit, as part of visits she is undertaking this year to all 20 of the circuits in the new West Midlands District. We will be inviting Rachel to preach in our churches in the new year.

Revd Phil Warrey has been appointed as the Chair of the District Property Advisory Committee, and also in this role has a seat on the District Policy Committee and the District Resourcing Mission Committee. He says:- “It’s good to be involved in the District and to be able to network, and have an ear to the ground on policy and where the grants are!”.

Bromyard Methodist’s new activity for young people “Soul Space”, had a district Micro Grant of £200 for start up costs. Ledbury’s Women’s Breakfast had a grant of £500+ towards their awayday. Ledbury Manse solar panels were half paid by a District Eco Grant.

### Bromyard News

Bromyard has a new Treasurer, Chris Ottershaw has taken over from Chris Knight. A big thank you to both of them.

Bromyard has started a new piece of Children’s work, an organic pilot project, working with Hereford Diocese, and funding from the Police & Crime Commissioner’s Office, & HCF Small Sparks Fund, and a District Microgrant, more information in our next issue. But Praise the Lord!

## A Regular Guy from the Street

In August, Ben Gvir, the Israeli Minister of Home Security, showed a video of himself mocking a gaunt prisoner in solitary confinement – an act which demeaned all Israel. The prisoner was Marwan Barghouti, who has served twenty three years as Israel's most important Palestinian prisoner. Soon after this visit Barghouti was reported to have been beaten unconscious during a prison transfer.

Marwan Barghouti is a terrorist – a term often used to condemn without further thought. For Palestinians he is a freedom fighter and one of the few who could unite Palestinians in a future state. For this reason alone, Israel is determined to keep him in gaol for life. As a former leader of Fatah, he may share responsibility for some of the worst atrocities committed in Israel during the second intifada . On the other hand, his trial was deeply flawed by international standards and the evidence unclear. He was acquitted on 21 counts of murder but convicted on the general charge of terrorism. We know that his policy had once been to limit attacks to police and soldiers who were intruding into Palestinian territory. These are his own words:

*"I am not a terrorist neither am I a pacifist. I am simply a regular guy from the Palestinian street advocating only what every other oppressed person advocates - the right to help myself in the absence of any help from anyone else."*

Several ‘terrorists’ have become leaders of their country – Makarios in Cyprus, Kenyatta in Kenya, Martin McGuiness in Northern Ireland, Nelson Mandela in South Africa and even the al-Qaeda leader, al-Sharaa of Syria, welcomed at the White House even as I write this article.

Whilst not forgetting the many Arab atrocities committed against Jews, we might remember also that several Prime Ministers of Israel were ‘terrorists’. David ben-Gurion approved Operation “Cast thy Bread” when Palestinian village wells were contaminated with typhoid. Menachem Begin was a leader of the Irgun which killed over 100 men, women and children in the Arab village of Deir Yassin. Yitzhak Shamir was a leader of Lehi, which plotted the assassination of the British Minister, Lord Moyne. Ariel Sharon led Unit 101 in the massacre at Qibya in the West Bank where 69 died, two thirds of them women and children.

We could hope and pray that Marwan Barghouti could be a ‘Mandela’ as some believe. He has supported the recognition of Israel, the Oslo Accords and a two state solution. Before his arrest, he had won the regard of several Israeli politicians. Most European nations support his release and President Trump has been toying with the idea. Mandela was strongly influenced by the Christian teaching of forgiveness. Barghouti is a Muslim, who could yet show that Islam is not lacking in mercy. It takes more than one to make peace. Mandela had de Klerk. Has Israel a partner for peace?

Graham

## **Bromyard continued.....**

Soul Space is on a Thursday early evening 4:30pm to 6pm. We eat, we craft, we play games, chat, chill and sing Karaoke. The pilot takes us through to end of December, and then we need to look at how we sustain this. (More grants!) We do need occasional help with the food side, but everyone needs a full DBS with Barring checks, so let me know if you can help, and we can do you an new DBS!

Our Place of Welcome continues to be well supported, and we are so pleased to be well supported in this good work by our friends from St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church.

Bromyard folk enjoy a sandwich lunch every month, and this month's speaker is Revd Phil.

## **Ledbury News**

It was a wonderful occasion when , on our Junior Church Anniversary Sunday, Phil was able to baptise Chi Chi and JJ. They are already a very special and much loved part of our congregation, but this was a time of real shared happiness . Congratulations and love to them, and to Mum and Dad, Joy and Johanne.

The town's turnout for Remembrance Sunday around the War Memorial was fantastic: if anyone tells you that people don't come to such events any more – don't believe them! Our church was well represented with both red and whiter poppies being worn, and our thanks to Rev Nigel Williams for being part of the civic line-up.

Rob and Mary Jolly's Coffee Day (yes, morning *and* afternoon!) was a great social time with so many people coming to see their new home – and with the added advantage that it raised an amazing £470 for Christian Aid. And talking of money, the annual emptying of the Action for Children collection boxes took place, and we were able to send £223 to this Methodist charity - our thanks to Heather for continuing to look after this.

Ledbury in Bloom has won another Gold Award, and even if our small patch of garden across the road still needs a lot of work, the judges were very interested to learn what we are trying to do there, and were warm in their encouragement for our plans.

So much for November! Now December is here, and we have two carol singing sessions – one, as usual, at the Co-op on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> at 5:30, and one at a new venue – outside the café in the Homend Mews at 5pm on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> which is the town's late night shopping evening. We would welcome anyone from other churches (or none) who would like to join us and help swell the singing!

And now we send our Christmas greetings to all our friends around the circuit. In a war-torn, war-weary world, we pray that you find the blessings of the Prince of Peace in this season, and are able to share that good news with all you meet.

*Brian Hudson*

## St. John's

Hello. I wonder how your shopping is progressing ? No comment from me as yet!

Earlier this month Mark Jackson hosted a wonderful afternoon during which he shared photographs of his recent trip to Australia. Tea was a welcome bonus and we are truly grateful to everyone who contributed to a lovely event. Thank you everyone, especially Mark. We appreciate you.

Our Bible Study group continues on Zoom fortnightly and we are currently studying the book of John. Everyone is welcome.

As we look forward to Christmas we will all remember its true significance because that's what we do....every year....

Fittingly, our church family has welcomed baby Noah, beautiful son of Shahul and Bhinny . He has joined us for services already and his baptism will be held on November 23rd.

We look forward to this very special celebration with prayerful anticipation. By the time In Touch is distributed we will be talking of this event in the past tense. We extend the warmest of welcomes to Noah and pray for him and his family as he learns to navigate a fast-changing world.

We wish everyone across the circuit a happy, meaningful Christmas.

May 2026 surprise us all with peace in unexpected places.

Pat Peden



At St. John's, the donations for coffee and tea on Saturdays and after the morning services are given to a different charity each month. In November, we supported **the Cart Shed**, which works with adults and young people experiencing mental health difficulties or with those who have emotional imbalances in their lives.

Based in north Herefordshire, they use enriching and engaging woodland activities such as woodcraft and coppice craft as well as horticulture to empower people to self-manage their mental and physical health in a sustainable way. Sessions are run by tutors, occupational therapists and mental health practitioners to help build confidence, identify barriers to skills development and explore other issues that might be making life challenging.

In 2017 the charity was awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

For more information, please visit the website: [www.thecartshed.org.uk](http://www.thecartshed.org.uk)

In December, the chosen charity is **The Living Room**.

The Living Room is a café, community larder, and safe community space all located in the heart of Hereford. It is a grassroots organisation that has grown organically, responding to the needs of the community. It welcomes everyone and is here to help.

Enjoy fantastic coffee and deliciously prepared food in a friendly and safe environment. The money you spend in the café goes directly into the charity, helping it provide advice and support to the community. In one visit, you can enjoy a delicious breakfast and a great cup of coffee while supporting people all around the county.

10 Commercial Road, Hereford

[Www.thelivingroomhereford.co.uk](http://Www.thelivingroomhereford.co.uk)

And in January, the chosen charity is **Hereford Community Farm** - a welcoming inclusive environment where people feel valued and supported to self-manage their health and well-being. It offers innovative support to people with additional needs through a programme of Animal Assisted Interventions, Therapeutic Horticulture, and Equine Assisted Learning.

*The vision is to provide innovative, caring and supportive life experiences, work opportunities, and structured learning programmes for people of all ages and backgrounds who have specific difficulties and who would benefit from the therapeutic effects of working with animals, horticulture, and the environment.*

The organisation has strong social, ethical, and environmental objectives and an ethos that

**'together we are stronger, working with the community and for the community'.**

[www.herefordcommunityfarm.co.uk](http://www.herefordcommunityfarm.co.uk)

Take a look at the video on their website - it's excellent!

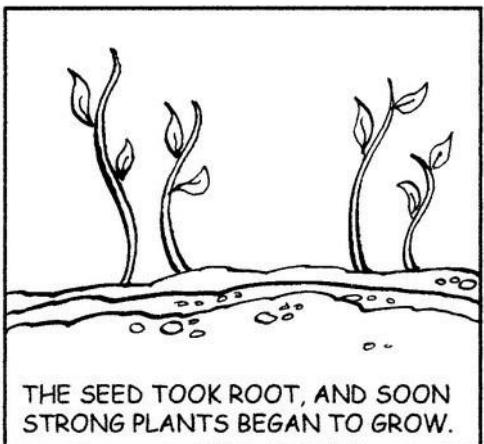


# The tale of the Wheat and the Weeds

JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS



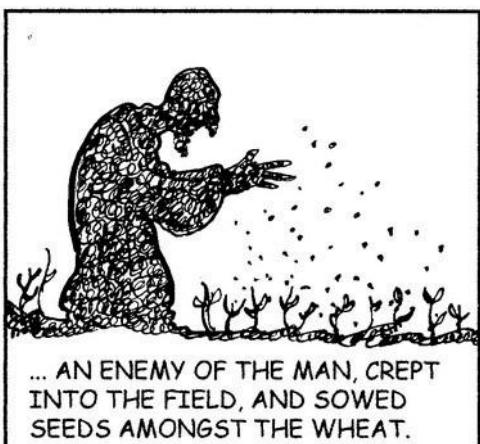
ONE WAS ABOUT A MAN WHO SOWED SEED IN HIS FIELD.



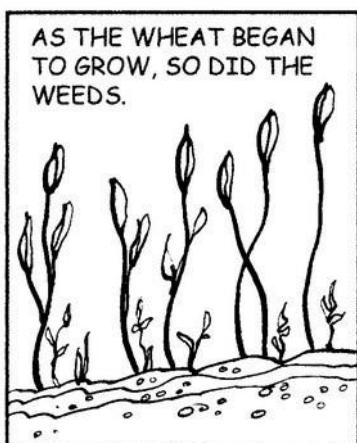
THE SEED TOOK ROOT, AND SOON STRONG PLANTS BEGAN TO GROW.



BUT ONE NIGHT, WHEN EVERYONE WAS ASLEEP...



... AN ENEMY OF THE MAN, CREEPT INTO THE FIELD, AND SOWED SEEDS AMONGST THE WHEAT.



AS THE WHEAT BEGAN TO GROW, SO DID THE WEEDS.



WHEN THE SERVANTS SAW THE WEEDS THEY SUGGESTED RIPPING THEM OUT.



NO, LET'S LEAVE THEM UNTIL HARVEST TIME!



IF YOU PULL THEM UP NOW, YOU MIGHT KILL THE WHEAT TOO. WE'LL SORT THEM OUT AT HARVEST.

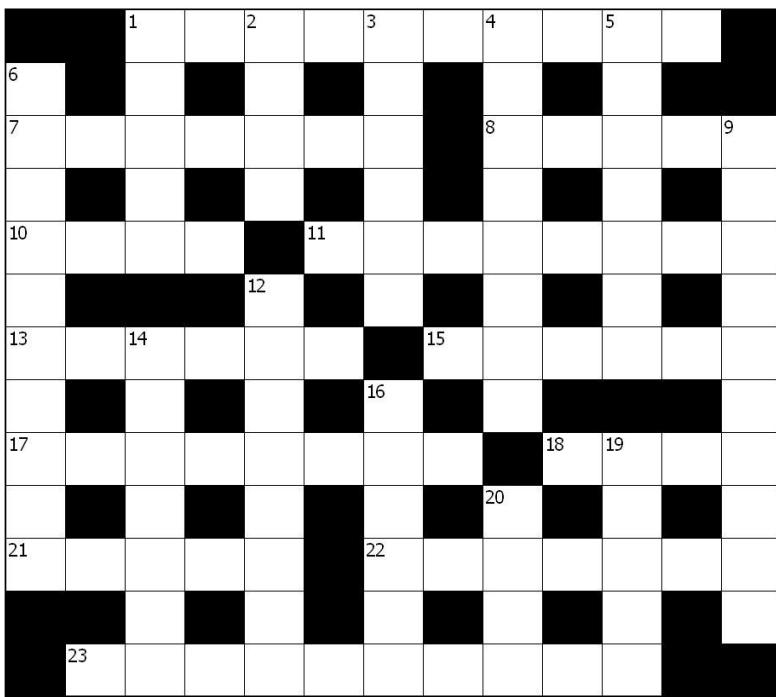


WHEN THE WHEAT WAS READY, IT WAS HARVESTED INTO HUGE BUNDLES.



BUT THE WEEDS WERE BURNED IN A LARGE FIRE.

THE PARABLE TELLS US THAT ALTHOUGH WE LIVE ALONGSIDE BADNESS, WE CAN KEEP SEPARATE FROM IT.



### Across

- 1 Provisional meeting place of God and the Jews (Exodus 25:9) (10)
- 7 David's third son, killed when his head got caught in a tree during a battle with his father (2 Samuel 18:14,15) (7)
- 8 They ruled much of the west coast of South America in the 15th and early 16th centuries (5)
- 10 Small deer of European and Asian extraction (4)
- 11 Seized control of (Numbers 21:25) (8)
- 13 Terror (Luke 24:5) (6)

- 15 First World War heroine shot by the Germans in Brussels, Nurse Edith .... (6)
- 17 Stormy (8)
- 18 A bitter variety of this, together with lamb and unleavened bread, was the Passover menu for anyone unclean (Numbers 9:11) (4)
- 21 Arson (anag.) (5)
- 22 How John Newton described God's grace in his well-known hymn (7)
- 23 Habitation (Isaiah 27:10) (10)

### Down

- 1 .... and see that the Lord is good (Psalm 34:8) (5)
- 2 The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are as ... as a lion (Proverbs 28:1) (4)
- 3 One of the exiles, a descendant of Parosh, who married a foreign woman (Ezra 10:25) (6)
- 4 He escaped from Nob when Saul killed the rest of his family and joined David (1 Samuel 22:19,20) (8)
- 5 City and lake in Central Switzerland (7)
- 6 Offer your bodies as living .... , holy and pleasing to God (Romans 12:1) (10)
- 9 Pouches carried by horses (Genesis 49:14) (10)
- 12 One who accepts government by God (8)
- 14 Aromatic substance commonly used in Jewish ritual (Exodus 30:1) (7)
- 16 He asked Jesus, 'What is truth?' (John 18:38) (6)
- 19 Are (Romans 13:1) (5)
- 20 You are to give him the name Jesus, because he will ... his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21) (4)

## **Christian Values: a reply**

I was intrigued by Graham's list of Christian values and I do thank him for his article. However, I would propose that the only value that is entirely central and, probably uniquely Christian, is forgiveness. This also encompasses all the other listed values.

Forgiveness is central to Christianity because it puts Christ's salvific action at the centre. It's probably also the thing that we find the most difficult to do or to receive. Forgiveness redeems the past creation and begins the new creation. This was begun at the Incarnation in God's costly act of love which, apparently, died on the Cross and yet, ultimately, defeated darkness and brought us all into the light and hope of the dawning new creation - borne of the reconciliation of forgiveness for the oppressor and the oppressed.

Forgiveness is costly and it is not about tolerance but it is about truth because it shines a light on the darkness we find within ourselves and others (Jn. 3:19-20). "And this is the judgement, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed."

Many people say they want justice when they have been wronged, but what is justice and how does that differ from revenge and punishment while still taking sin seriously? This brings to mind the example of Desmond Tutu's Truth and Reconciliation Committee in South Africa and those who practise restorative justice because there can be no healing, justice, peace or reconciliation without true forgiveness.

Forgiveness requires humility for both the oppressor and the oppressed and will ultimately lead to freedom for both rather than what we see so often in our world where old enmities, often from the far distant past, are reignited in conflict. That humility is also required for service in order to practise the servant leadership that Graham advocates.

Christianity, for me, is not a religion of propositions or rules but one of relationship to Christ and each other and, as the redeemed people of God - forgiven and forgiving - then we are called to be a light to the world by our example (Mt. 5:14).

Finally, I do agree with Graham that "love is the basis and goal of all things" because God is Love and his love was shown by the sacrificial death on the Cross for the forgiveness and reconciliation of His creation.

*Linda Williams*

# **Women's Breakfast Fellowship**

Some things just surprise us! When Caroline and I talked about setting up a group for women that gave us time to encourage and challenge each other we wondered if anyone else would be interested! It's been so great to see this group deepen connections, share stories and deepen faith. It's been a year of stories! Our Bible readings have followed the seasons – both in nature and in the church's calendar. This has also helped us to connect over shared experiences. As we come to the end of 2025, we will celebrate this year of breakfasts! Over the croissants and coffee there has been laughter and love – that's definitely worth giving thanks for!

Our December Fellowship is on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December. We will be using some of Caroline's lovely Nativity sets to help us look a little closer at the Christmas story. All women are welcome – just turn up! We start at 9am and finish at 10.30am

Away Day – yes, we've booked already! It's on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February - do let us know if you'd like to come.

Margaret Kunzer and Caroline Warrey

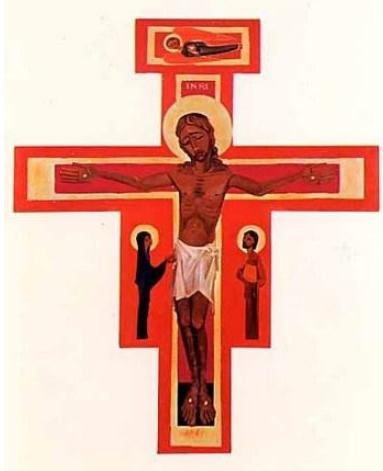
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## **Taizé Worship**

All Saints Church, Hereford

Friday 5th December

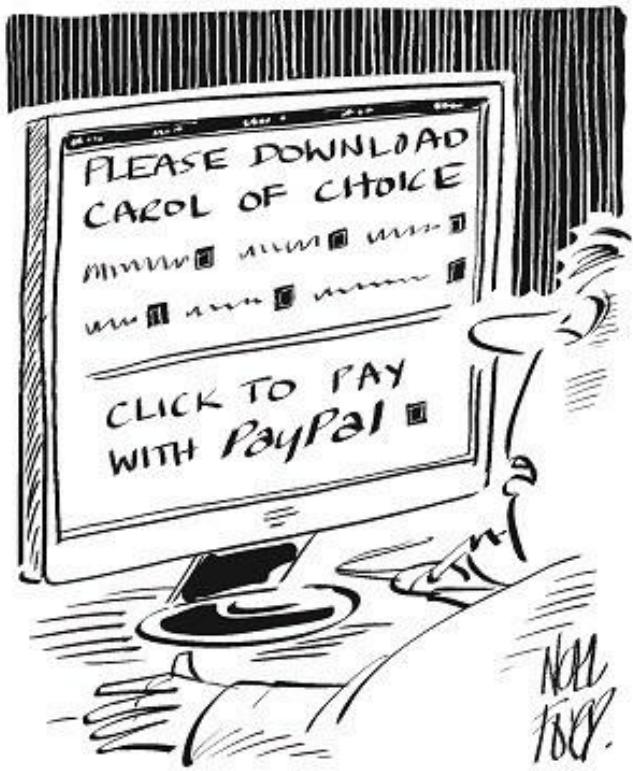
12.10pm



## **Bible Study**

Our meetings continue on Zoom, starting at 7pm. We meet on Wednesday 10th December but then not until 14th January. Let Sallie Hopper know if you would like to receive an invitation to the meetings.





We've got online carol-singers again!



Sara preferred to let people work out the hymns for themselves

## Crossword Answers

**ACROSS:** 1, Tabernacle. 7, Absalom. 8, Incas. 10, Roes. 11, Captured. 13, Fright. 15, Cavell. 17, Cyclonic. 18, Herb. 21, Sonar. 22, Amazing. 23, Settlement.  
**DOWN:** 1, Taste. 2, Bold. 3, Ramiah. 4, Abiathar. 5, Lucerne. 6, Sacrifices. 9, Saddlebags. 12, Theocrat. 14, Incense. 16, Pilate. 19, Exist. 20, Save.

## Smile Lines

**True story**—The nativity play was going as planned and Joseph and Mary were going from ‘house’ to ‘house’ knocking on the doors and asking if there was any room for them. As they continued to get ‘no room’ answers, a little voice called from the back of the church: “You should have booked!”

### Who was the Real Virgin?

A ten-year-old, under the tutelage of her grandmother, was becoming quite knowledgeable about the Bible. Then one day she floored her grandmother by asking, “Which virgin was the mother of Jesus? The virgin Mary or the King James Virgin?”



Hereford Christian Life Church

**Friday 19th December, 6.00pm (doors open from 5.30pm)**

**Cinderella - Message: Choose Kindness**

Join us for a sparkling reimagining of the classic fairytale, with talking mice, wicked plots, awkward heroes and one hopeful heroine. This Christmas, discover the extraordinary power of kindness.

You are cordially invited to the Royal Christmas Ball! The most extravagant event of the century is here at last, and the whole kingdom is invited – from the richest reveller to the humblest servant.

In a kingdom decked with holly and hope, Ella lives a quiet life of chores, often cleaning out the cinders from the fire. But when the invitation to the grandest event of the year arrives, Ella's step-mother won't let her go to the Ball and her dreams seem further away than ever – until a little Christmas magic shows up in her hour of need. But will the magic last? Will she get back home in time? What happens when the magic runs out?

*If you would like to pay for a ticket that can be given to someone to use as a gift, please could you purchase one of the Pay It Forward tickets available. Thank you*

# CARDS FOR GOOD CAUSES

Yes, it's that time of year again!

The Hereford Cards for Good Causes shop is now open, as always it's at All Saints Church and Café, and it's open Monday - Saturday, 10.00am till 4.00pm.



## The Life & Soul Kitchen

This community café in Credenhill was recently visited by Roy Crew and Mary and Malcolm Brookes, and they gave it a resounding 'thumbs up'!

So what are you all waiting for?

## Tea Church at St. John's

4.00pm on the 3rd Sunday

21st December

18th January

ALL WELCOME!



# Safeguarding Sunday

This was marked on Sunday 16th November and congregations were introduced to some very powerful material, including the poem reproduced below. Due to some technical issues at St. John's, or if you were unable to attend, you may not have heard these words . (Source: 'thirtyone:eight')

## Safe

What does it mean to feel, and be, safe?

It's holding the hand of someone you love. Or a parent's magic kiss on a grazed knee. It's a baby sound asleep in a loving embrace. That's safe.

It's when you're wrapped up warm and tight, indoors on a dark and cold night, somewhere you know, somewhere that's comfortable, where you can just 'be'. That's safe.

It's knowing you're not on your own because there's someone there at the end of the phone, to call or to text when you're feeling alone. That someone you can always rely on, that shoulder to cry on when things get tough. That's safe.

Safe can be the shield, the defence, the fortress, a lighthouse guiding you through the storm, or the harbour offering protection when the seas get rough.

Or safe can be that big red traffic sign that says stop, there's danger ahead.

And isn't that what the church is called to be? A refuge for the refugee, a sanctuary for the broken. A space for the hurting to find healing, a place for the last, the least, the lost, those on the margins and those in the centre, a place to find meaning. For God's eternal banner over me and you is love. And there is no fear in love for His perfect love casts out all fear and is safe.

We've not lived up to that expectation, we've fallen short, instead we've prioritised our own reputation, and if that's not cause for lamentation, I don't what is.

I don't mean to be the voice of condemnation; It's just time to prioritise the conversation. Giving space for those who need to, to share, to be believed, be renewed and find restoration.

If those things that were once kept out of sight, and covered up, are brought into the open. And we make space for the unspeakable things to be spoken. Their power can be broken.

Because a church that faces its shortcomings, and gives space to listen, reflects something of the kingdom of God. A church which truly loves is a church striving to be safe.

So, it's time to put safeguarding on the church's agenda, to change the culture of yesterday, to pause and remember. Because safe is bold, it's the firm foundation beneath our feet, it means we can stand and take the leap of faith to have those conversations and be a church that's safe.

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## **Mark's Australia Slide Afternoon**

This event at St. John's in November was a huge success; 35 people attended and were entertained by the photographs and especially Mark's engaging commentary. And as if that weren't enough, they were then treated to a delicious tea!

It had been organised as a fundraiser for Methodist Homes and agreed that the money raised should go to the Amenity Fund at Pilgrim Court, where Joyce Wayman now lives. And the afternoon raised over £200!

*Joyce writes:*

Thanks from Pilgrims Court for your generosity in giving to our Amenity Fund.

We are a community who live in 40 independent flats and we join together for fellowship and fun. We have a Chaplain who offers worship and care alongside other daily activities.

Last month we had a fashion show and enjoyed buying new clothes together.

Your money will help to replace or repair electrical goods and supplement our outings.

Best wishes,

Joyce



# The Hereford Gospels for Today

## CALL OUT TO ARTISTS

Help Hereford Cathedral celebrate 1350 years of Hereford Diocese by contributing to The Hereford Gospels for Today!

Submit artwork to be pasted into or reproduced for this very special newly commissioned book which will respond to the Gospels today.

This project is open to all ages, backgrounds and abilities. Closing date for submissions is 31 December 2025.

**Find out more here:**

[herefordcathedral.org/news/gospels-for-today](http://herefordcathedral.org/news/gospels-for-today)

**If you have any questions, please contact Bishop David Thomson:**

[HerefordGospels@skypilots.co.uk](mailto:HerefordGospels@skypilots.co.uk)



## Singing for Fun

The Singing for Fun Group meets on the second and fourth Fridays of the month at 7pm in the Lower Hall at St John's. This group was set up as a response to a number of people saying they missed the opportunity to sing and, as a group, we recognise that singing is good for our mental well being. We sing a variety of music and you don't need a knowledge of music or to have been in a choir previously to join us. If you feel like a sing, please come along - all are welcome!



Herefordshire  
COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION

## **Christian Aid Christmas Appeal 2025**

“Peace on earth” expresses hope for a world without violence and conflict, yet there is great turmoil in our world just now. In response, Christian Aid continues to provide emergency aid to families displaced in conflict and give financial assistance and support to communities in crisis.

Your donation will help towards this vital work. For details, please go to [christianaid.org.uk>give>ways to donate](http://christianaid.org.uk/give/ways-to-donate).

To make a one off donation by phone, please call 020 7523 2269 or send a cheque (with a note to say that it is for the Christmas Appeal 2025) to Christian Aid, 35 - 41 Lower Marsh, London SE1 7RL.



Thankyou.

## **Knitting for the Shoebox Appeal**

Thank you to all who helped:

- Margaret, in Abergavenny, who knitted 20 scarves with her own wool and wanted to give a donation to the appeal;
- All the ladies who helped with sewing up, especially bags and handles etc - you know who you are, thanks to all of you!
- Members all around the Circuit who donated wool.

Without your support I could not do this.

Total numbers are:

Hats and scarves	148
Bags	10
Pencil cases	29



Last of all, please save your wool as in January I shall start knitting again for 2026. Thank you very much,

Anne Beevers

# **Advent**

Sunday 30th November was the first of the four weeks of Advent but, aside from enjoying opening Advent calendars, what is it all about?

Have you ever watched the sunrise? The light begins as a very faint glow on the eastern horizon but gradually the glow becomes bigger and brighter, changing from reds to oranges and yellows, as the sun rises higher and higher in the sky dispelling the darkness.

The word advent means coming and so Advent is a time of waiting and preparing for the coming of the Light, our Lord Jesus Christ, into this dark world of ours. The Light came over 2000 years ago and it was temporarily eclipsed at the Crucifixion, but it was still there. Just as the sun rises fully into the sky and dispels all the darkness, so Jesus will come fully into our world and all the darkness within us and around us will be obliterated. Meanwhile, we live within the birth pangs of the New Creation, which began with the birth of Jesus and it will end with the glorious light when He dwells fully with us.

We can experience a little of this now when we are in communion with Him. “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life (Jn. 8:12).

, Now we look forward with excitement to the dawning of the new day when we will be bathed in the warmth of God's love for us and his whole creation experiencing peace and joy. Until that day we can have glimpses of that love, hope, joy and peace, not just in Advent, Christmas or Easter but always as he comes to us now if we invite him in.

“Behold I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.” (Rev. 3:20).

Lastly, may I wish you peace and joy this Christmas and for 2026.

*Linda Williams*



# Church Services in December

## Sunday 7th December

Bromyard	10.30am
Ledbury	10.30am
	2.30pm
St John's	10.30am

## Advent 2

Revd. Phil Warrey
Revd. Peter Grimwood
Revd Bev Ramsden
Mr. Keith White

*Christingle*  
*Light up a Life*

## Sunday 14th December

Bromyard	2.30pm
Ledbury	. 10.30am
	6.00pm
St John's	10.30am

## Advent 3

Revd. Ruth Eldridge
Revd. Kath Baldwin
Gillian/Stephen Chowns
Taizé

*Holy Communion*  
*Holy Communion*  
*Taizé*

## Sunday 21st December

Bromyard	10.30am
Ledbury	10.30am
	4.00pm
St John's	10.30am
	4.00pm

## Advent 4

Revd. Ruth Eldridge
Ms. Lisa-Jayne Lewis
Revd. Phil Warrey
Revd. Phil Warrey
Mr. Roy Little

*Carol service*  
*DIY Nativity*  
*Carol Service*  
*Carol Service*  
*Tea Church*

## Wednesday 24th December

Ledbury	11.30pm
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## Christmas Eve

Revd. Phil Warrey

*Holy Communion*

## Thursday 25th December

Bromyard	10.00am
Ledbury	10.00am
St John's	10.00am

## Christmas Day

Mrs. Wendy Werrell
Revd. Phil Warrey
Revd. Dr. Nigel Williams



## Sunday 28th December

Bromyard	2.30pm
Ledbury	
St John's	10.30am

## Christmas 1

Revd. Phil Warrey
NO SERVICE
Revd. Peter Grimwood

*Holy Communion*

# Church Services in January

Sunday 4th January	
Bromyard	10.30am
Ledbury	10.30am
	2.30pm
St John's	10.30am

Christmas 2	
	Mr. Chris Ottershaw
	Revd. Phil Warrey
	Revd. Phil Warrey
	Revd. Kath Baldwin

*Relaxed*

## Sunday 11th January

Bromyard	2.30pm
Ledbury	10.30am
	6.00pm
St John's	10.30am

## Ordinary 1

Revd. Phil Warrey	Covenant
Mr. Stephen & Dr. Gillian Chowns	
Mr. Stephen & Dr. Gillian Chowns – <i>Taizé</i>	

## Sunday 18th January

Bromyard	10.30am
Ledbury	10.30am
St John's	10.30am
	4.00pm

## Ordinary 2

Revd. Ruth Eldridge	
Revd. Phil Warrey	<i>Holy Comm, AAW</i>
Mr. Tony Pitt	

Revd. Phil Warrey *Tea Church*

## Sunday 25th January

Bromyard	2.30pm
Ledbury	10.30am
St John's	10.30am

## Ordinary 3

Revd. Phil Warrey	<i>Tea Church/WPCU</i>
Joint service - Ledbury Baptist Church	

Mr. Keith White

## Carol Singing

Two opportunities to join with others to sing carols in Hereford this year:

**Wednesday 17th December, from 5.45pm.** You are invited to join Hereford Palestine Group, 'Carol' singing at the Bull in High Town. We will be using familiar tunes but singing Palestinian-themed words. Please join us if you can.

**Saturday 20th December, 11am.** Join with Christians from city churches (venue to be confirmed).



# Lectionary Readings

**30 November**

*1st Sunday of Advent*  
Isaiah 2: 1-5  
Psalm 122  
Romans 13: 11-14  
Matthew 24: 36-44

**7 December**

*2nd Sunday of Advent*  
Isaiah 11:1-10  
Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19  
Romans 15:4-13  
Matthew 3:1-12

**14 December**

*3rd Sunday of Advent*  
Isaiah 35: 1-10  
Psalm 146: 5-10 or Canticle: Magnificat (Luke 1:46b-55)  
James 5: 7-10  
Matthew 11: 2-11

**21 December**

*4th Sunday of Advent*  
Isaiah 7: 10-16  
Psalm 80: 1-7, 17-19  
Romans 1: 1-7  
Matthew 1: 18-25

**28 December**

*1st Sunday of Christmas*  
Isaiah 63: 7-9  
Psalm 148  
Hebrews 2: 10-18  
Matthew 2: 13-23

**4 January**

*2nd Sunday of Christmas*  
Jeremiah 31: 7-14  
Psalm 147: 12-20  
Ephesians 1: 3-14  
John 1: (1-9) 10-18 OR Ecclesiasticus 24: 1-12 Canticle: Wisdom of Solomon 10: 15-21

Ephesians 1: 3-14

John 1: (1-9) 10-18

**11 January**

*Sunday after Epiphany and 1st in Ordinary Time (Baptism of Jesus)*

Isaiah 42: 1-9

Psalm 29

Acts 10: 34-43

Matthew 3: 13-17

**18 January**

*2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time*  
Isaiah 49: 1-7  
Psalm 40: 1-11  
1 Corinthians 1: 1-9  
John 1: 29-42

**25 January**

*3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time*  
Isaiah 9: 1-4  
Psalm 27: 1, 4-9  
1 Corinthians 1: 10-18  
Matthew 4: 12-23

**1 February**

*4th Sunday in Ordinary Time*  
Micah 6: 1-8  
Psalm 15  
1 Corinthians 1: 18-31  
Matthew 5: 1-12

# **Diary Dates**

**Friday 5th December**

12.10pm                    Taizé service at All Saints' Church, Hereford

**Saturday 6th December**

9.00 - 10.30am            Women's Prayer Breakfast at Ledbury

**Wednesday 7th December**

7.00pm                    Zoom Bible study

**Wednesday 17th December**

5.45pm                    Carol-singing in High Town (see p. 18)

**Saturday 20th December**

11.00am                    Carol-singing in Hereford (see p. 18)

**Saturday 3rd January**

9.00 - 10.30am            Women's Prayer Breakfast at Ledbury



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## **Keeping InTouch**

**Circuit contacts:**

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Circuit Administrator: [admin@herefordshiremethodists.org.uk](mailto:admin@herefordshiremethodists.org.uk)

The deadline for the February edition of In Touch is **Sunday 11th January**; ideally, please send material by email to [hfdscircuitnews@gmail.com](mailto:hfdscircuitnews@gmail.com)

Or by Post to 18 Southbank Close, HEREFORD HR1 2TQ