

Hilltop

December 2019 / January 2020

Newsletter of The Church at Bents Green

Café Carols – Sunday 15th December
6.30pm – informal service with lots of Christmas carols!

Carol Service – Sunday 22nd Dec
6.30pm (with children's choir)

Christingle Service on Christmas Eve
5.30pm (with children's choir)

Christmas Day

10.30am Morning Service
a joint service with the congregation of Banner Cross Church

Sunday 12th January

10.30am Covenant Service followed by a bring and share lunch

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A community church sharing the love of Jesus

Christmas Services

Sunday 1 December	Advent 1	Café Breakfast 10 am for 10.30 am Morning Service Decorating the Tree 3 pm to 5.30 pm – Crafts for all ages to join in with (including little ones), plus refreshments
Sunday 8 December	Advent 2	Morning Service with Communion 10.30 am
Wednesday 11 Dec		W.O.R.K Ltd Christmas Service 10.30 am
Sunday 15 December	Advent 3	Worship at 10.30 am with songs by the Children's Choir and the Young People's Trio Café Carols at 6.30 pm led by our Worship Group - informal and modern Christmas Carols for everyone
Sunday 22 December	Advent 4	Morning Service 10.30 am Carol Service at 6.30 pm with a song by the Children's Choir
Christmas Eve		Christingle Service at 5.30 pm with songs by the Children's Choir and the Young People's Trio.
Christmas Day		Morning Service at 10.30 am when we will be joined by the congregation from Banner Cross Church

Church News

Sadly, **Val Coleman** passed away in November and we send condolences to her family and friends. Val was a regular worshipper here at Bents Green and known to many in the congregation.

Well done to the **Games Craft and Chatter group** who have sent off 27 Christmas Gift Boxes to Operation Christmas Child. Thank you to all who contributed to the boxes.

We are looking for a new Editor or small team of Editors for Hilltop

In March next year I will complete 10 years as editor and feel that is a good time to hand over to others. The Leadership Team want Hilltop to continue and to be a newsletter which helps to introduce the church and its activities to others as well as passing on news to those who attend the church. But the way this is done, and the format of the newsletter can be different depending on the vision of those who take over. **If you are interested, please speak to Tricia North or a member of the Leadership Team.**

Prayer – If you would like us to pray for you confidentially you can contact us by email reyarp42@sky.com or leave a note in the Prayer Box in the church corridor (side entrance) which is emptied daily.

Grace Food Bank Sheffield

We're getting ready for Christmas. Can you help us?

Pat and Bob Hutchinson are collecting festive food ready to take to Grace Food Bank for food parcels for Christmas. If you would like to donate special food, then Grace Food Bank would welcome:

Christmas biscuits (medium and small boxes), Christmassy chocolates and sweets, Bottles of Shloer or equivalent, Crisps in a cardboard tube (more robust!), Selection boxes, Coffee, Tinned ham, Tinned salmon, Christmas cakes (fruit cake/mini chocolate logs or similar) All with a best before date after 25th December please.

Donating Money instead of Food

- Donate a regular amount by Standing Order
- Send a cheque to: The Grace Food Bank, 240 Lowedges Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S8 7JB
- Donate through PayPal (you don't have to have a PayPal account). **See website for details:** <https://gracefoodbanksheffield.org.uk>

Letter from our minister

In the run up to Christmas, are you one of those people who has it all under control? The sort of person who buys next year's cards in the New Year sales, who has everything bought, wrapped, labelled and ready to be given out at the beginning of December. Or, are you someone who runs around in circles like Corporal Jones, in Dad's Army, shouting 'Don't panic, don't panic'?

The truth is that most of us are somewhere in-between the two extremes.

Whether it be the Christmas festivities, the challenge of Brexit, or the General election, our response to such events reflects who we are and some of our deepest felt thoughts



and emotions. Do we want to embrace the opportunities and challenges, or run away and hide until it is all over? We may find ourselves oscillating between the two.

Dare we imagine God's attitude and approach to the world before the first Christmas? Was there a willingness to embrace, get involved, to be immersed in the human experience? Or was there a judgemental separation, a giving up and a limiting of how love is shown and shared to the world?

From the start of time, the story of God's approach to the world is one of involvement, openness and countless expressions of patient, passionate love towards all people; and the clearest expression of this is in the person of Jesus.

In the birth story of Jesus and throughout his life, not everything is neat, sorted and under control. An unplanned pregnancy, a birth in a faraway place at the whim of the political powers of the day, the presence of soldiers on every street corner to keep order, the need to flee the infanticide and the life of the refugee for the young family, is enough to make anyone feel out of their depth. Certainly it was far from an ordered, secure start to life. But one which sadly reflects everyday living for many in the world then and now.

In his life and ministry, Jesus had to be alert to the threats of those in authority as he challenged injustices and the established ways of thinking about God, which ultimately led to the cross. A far from ordered and organised life, but also a far from panicked one. Rather a life of trust in the ways of God, a life waiting on God's leading in prayer and silence, a life of active love and engagement especially among those on the margins.

So, whether you are organised, or feel anxious about all that needs doing, the Jesus way is one of embracing what life throws at us, in the context of God's embrace of love, in which we learn to trust, to share and to hope in the mystery of the transforming kingdom let loose in the world.

Peace, **Tim**



Exclusive News from Hollywood?

Disney have announced their latest live action remake of favourite classic films. After the huge success of Beauty and the Beast with Emma Watson and Aladdin with Will Smith, their next live action production will be Toy Story 5. This will feature an outstanding cast with some of your best-loved stars bringing your favourite characters to life before your very eyes.

The world premiere of this outstanding production will be here at Bents Green on Friday 21st February at 7.30pm, followed by two other exclusive shows on Saturday 22nd February at 7.30pm and Sunday 23rd February at 4.30pm. Yes, it's the annual Bents Green traditional family pantomime, with great songs, exciting dancing, jokes old and new, and lots of audience participation. Come along and see Woody, Buzz Lightyear and all their friends literally come to life.

You must have a ticket to come, but the tickets are free. We hope for generous donations to cover our expenses. Members of the cast can order tickets in December, worshippers at the church (who give us amazing help and support) can order tickets in January, and everyone can order tickets in February. Somehow, we have always managed to squeeze everyone in. To order tickets, please email dglennevans@hotmail.co.uk



A Christmas Quiz for Hilltop 2019

Just when you thought you knew all the Christmas carols, those helpful Bents Green elves have gone and lost the words for our Advent Carols Calendar – well, to be honest, just the first lines of some of our better-known ones. Can you help our Choirmaster put the words in, before our Christmas Carol Service? We've recovered the second lines - can you fill in the first lines?

Just for a bit of fun ... see how many you can guess without looking in the books

- | | | |
|----|-------|--|
| 1 | _____ | Wing your flight o'er all the earth |
| 2 | _____ | Did the guiding star behold |
| 3 | _____ | The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head |
| 4 | _____ | A long way from Your home |
| 5 | _____ | Whereon the Saviour of mankind was born |
| 6 | _____ | Born to set Thy people free |
| 7 | _____ | Entered our world, Your glory veiled |
| 8 | _____ | When the snow lay round about |
| 9 | _____ | Glory to the new born King |
| 10 | _____ | Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone |
| 11 | _____ | That glorious song of old |
| 12 | _____ | Let earth receive her King |
| 13 | _____ | Joyful and triumphant |
| 14 | _____ | And ransom captive Israel |
| 15 | _____ | It is the night of the dear Saviour's birth |
| 16 | _____ | How still we see thee lie |
| 17 | _____ | Stood a lowly, cattle shed |
| 18 | _____ | To hear the news the angels bring |
| 19 | _____ | Born for us on earth below |
| 20 | _____ | A draughty stable with an open door |



Compiled by David Wood

Holy Habit 7 - Eating Together

Getting our teeth into it!

"They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts." (Acts 2:46)

Over the winter we are focusing on the 7th of the 10 Holy Habits we are exploring – Eating Together! "What?" I hear you say, "is that really a holy habit? At least that's one of the 10 that I'm good at!"

The coming weeks provide plenty of opportunities to eat together at church. We have breakfast at 10.00am on the first Sunday of every month, and on 12 January we have the annual covenant service, followed by lunch together. Mark that in your diary!

But the emphasis of Acts 2:46 is on the home. As they say, the family that eats together stays together, and friends and neighbours can be invited on occasion to share in a meal too. Eating Together doesn't have to be pre-arranged, 'best cutlery' occasions! As we all know, even a cuppa and a biscuit can be a precious time of sharing with one another.

There are 10 occasions in Luke alone when Jesus is seen sharing a meal. We shall probably look at several of these during services over the coming weeks, and in the weekly emails. It's interesting to note that most of the meals were in someone else's house, or picnics on the hillside or on the beach. Sometimes Jesus ate with close friends, like Martha and Mary, in Luke 10: 38 – 42. In Luke 7: 36 – 50 we see Jesus invited by one of his critics – Simon the Pharisee, one of the religious leaders, and In Luke 19: 1 – 10, we see him inviting himself to stay at the house of the chief tax collector in Jericho.

We probably think first of being the hosts, at home or at church, and that's great. But Jesus sets the example of being guests in someone else's house. How do we handle such situations when they arise? We probably take a small gift and are appreciative of all we are offered. How can we use occasions when we are the guests to spread the love of Jesus? Let's hope we all get lots of opportunities over the Christmas season! **Holy Habits Team**



What are we waiting for?

At any time there can be a dozen answers. At this time of year it is likely to be Christmas! Advent calendars mark off the waiting time with a little door for each day. In Church there will be an Advent ring with four red candles round a larger white one, representing the Sundays leading up to Christmas Day. The last to be lit is the white one to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the Light of the World.

The energy we call God has given us a creation beyond imagination. Science enables us to glimpse the wonders of our universe. Jesus reveals the nature of its Author. He is the human expression of God, Immanuel, God with us.

As with any birth this is only the beginning. Jesus grew to become our entry into the Kingdom of God through His life, death and resurrection.

It is this arrival we are waiting for. Happy Christmas!

Janet Nowell

Advent (from the Latin 'adventus') means arrival



The Worship Group at Christmas

It's official – we love Christmas worship and can't get enough of it. Whilst many of us complain about Christmas trimmings seeming to appear earlier each year in town centres and shops, many of us are perhaps a little sad that we don't get the opportunity to sing more of our favourite Christmas carols and songs. There are just so many great traditional carols, as well as some fantastic new songs, to choose from, and although some of us will have heard and sung many of these songs since childhood, yet we seem never to tire of singing them again and again. Why is that? Is it because it triggers in us a nostalgia for happy Christmases past, memories of being with family, or a hope for the future?

Or is it that, when we strip away all the twee and schmaltzy stuff and actually focus on the words of the carol we are singing, then the wonder of the Christmas story - from the prophecy of the Messiah's coming, the Angel Gabrielle appearing to Mary, the journey with Joseph to Bethlehem, the stable, the shepherds, the angel host, the wise men and much more – speaks to us afresh and still amazes, excites and humbles us? Surely this is absolutely the best and greatest 'news' ever to sing about, and it is what makes it such a genuine thrill to sing about, **every** Christmas.

It is why songwriters continue to compose new Christmas songs for us and why we will never tire of the great carols; they help us to give acceptable worship to God, and to worship in spirit and in truth. God is waiting for our response. Are we 'bursting' to praise, celebrate and to sing about the gift of love God has given to us by the birth of Jesus? We hope you are as excited as us.

So, it doesn't matter whether our most loved carol tells of a favourite part of the incredible account of the birth of Jesus, or that it explains why God gave his Son to be a light to the world; what matters is that we are still excited by it and challenged to respond. If part of your response to God's amazing gift of love is to sing about it (or maybe to listen), then we have lots of opportunities during December for you to come and join us at Bents Green and maybe sing your favourite carol or even a new one. As one of the Worship Group's favourite Christmas songs entreats us all 'Noel, Noel, Come and see what God has done!' - so we entreat you to join us if you can, to sing again your favourite carol and to share in the celebration of God's most amazing gift of his Son, Jesus. **The BG Worship Group**



Opportunities to sing carols at Bents Green Church

- Carol Concert on Saturday 14 December at 7.00 pm with the City of Sheffield Teachers Choir at Bents Green Church (tickets available on the door)
- Café Carols lead by the Worship Group on Sunday evening 15 December at 6.30 (informal service with lots of singing and light refreshments)
- Carol service on Sunday 22 December at 6.30 pm,
- and carols are included at the regular Sunday services in Advent (see p2)

Japan

In October I had the great privilege of attending some of the Rugby World Cup matches in Japan. I have previously been to World Cup matches in this country and in France, but this was a whole new ball game. I've never been further east than Turkey before, so I had some trepidation about what to expect.

It began badly when I arrived at Fukuoka Airport on the southern island of Kyushu, but my luggage didn't. I checked in at the hotel, then I had to find somewhere to buy some clothes. I could only find an H&M, so I was much trendier than usual. I didn't need any toiletries, as hotel bathrooms in Japan come with everything you could need plus things you don't. In the former category were toothpaste and a toothbrush. In the latter category were all sorts of buttons on the toilet which squirted water at you from different angles. More details are inappropriate in a church magazine.

Things improved the next day when my luggage arrived, and I joined a queue at the train station for my rail pass. The people in front of me were Welsh, and to my surprise two of them were from Trebanos, the small village in the Swansea Valley where my mother lived. Not only did we know lots of people in common, they happened to be the parents of Justin Tipuric, one of the stars of the Welsh rugby team. I didn't get to meet him, but I did meet George North later on. He was huge, but very nice!

I stayed on the island of Kyushu most of the time, 700 miles away from the typhoon that struck Tokyo. There was an earthquake elsewhere on the island, an active volcano pouring out steam that I went especially to visit as my son Jonathan is a geologist and I brought him some pumice stone. There were also lots of tsunami warnings in every seaside town, but I never felt unsafe, wherever I went. However, it is a fallacy that Japanese trains, buses and coaches are always on time. That may apply to the bullet trains, but it did not apply to the trains I could afford!

The main reason I always felt safe was that the Japanese people were welcoming, helpful, charming, courteous, and brilliant at queuing! I grew up with tales of the River Kwai, Tenko and awful prisoner-of-war camps, but the current generation of Japanese people are the kindest, most pleasant people of any country I have ever been to. If somebody drops something in the street, they run to pick it up and carry it for them. They actively want you to feel welcome in their country.

I only saw 5 churches in all my travels in Japan, but I did see lots of shrines. The Japanese are not religious but they are very spiritual. I shall be saying more about this at the morning service on 5th January.

I saw Wales win three matches against Fiji, Uruguay and France, which was great. I was in Japan with my son Gareth and his girlfriend, and we spent 4 nights in Tokyo, which is where I had my only disappointment. I have stood on the slopes of Mt Fuji, but I have not seen Mt Fuji. It was covered in cloud, as apparently it usually is, except in winter. So I would definitely recommend Japan as a beautiful place to visit, but don't expect to see Mt Fuji.

Glenn Evans



"La Marseillaise" versus "Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau"



Pre-match entertainment from traditional dancers

Do not ask me to remember

Written from the perspective of the author's wife, Esther, who suffered from alzheimers disease.

Do not ask me to remember,
Don't try to make me understand,
Let me rest and know you're with me,
Kiss my cheek and hold my hand.
I'm confused beyond your concept,
I am sad and sick and lost.
All I know is that I need you
To be with me at all cost.
Do not lose your patience with me,
Do not scold or curse or cry.
I can't help the way I'm acting,
Can't be different though I try.
Just remember that I need you,
That the best of me is gone,
Please don't fail to stand beside me,
Love me 'til my live is done.

Owen Darnell

Submitted by those who attended the recent training session on dementia and found the poem very helpful.

Is it still raining?

"Is it still raining?" is a question that will have been asked in many Sheffield homes this autumn. When we consider the heartache caused by flooding to whole villages only a few miles away we realise how fortunate most of us have been. You will probably be aware that Sheffield's rainfall this autumn had already surpassed that of Sheffield's worst previous autumn with a full two weeks still to go.

However, as you stare out of the window at the rain, you might want to count your blessings that you don't live in Mawsynram, India where the average annual rainfall is nearly 12 metres. Can you imagine what it must be like living in a place where the seasonal rainfall is seven times worse than what we've had in Sheffield every season year in year out! Or how about living in Cherrapunji, India, which in its wettest year, had nearly 26.5 metres of rain in one year!

Then imagine what it would be like to have 136 successive years of rainfall as bad as Cherrapunji! And that is assuming that none of the water was lost to evaporation! That is what it would have taken for Mount Ararat in Turkey to have been almost submerged in flooding (thought to have been the landing place of Noah's ark).

Or if it had only rained for 40 days that would have needed an average of 90 metres of rain a day!

Derek North

Regular church activities and contact details

Services at the Church at Bents Green

All are welcome at these services

Sunday mornings at 10.30 am During morning services there is a crèche for little ones, Sparklers and Sparks Clubs for younger children and Fireworks and Sunday Club for older children and young people.

Sunday evenings at 6.30 pm - An informal service often including tea, coffee and time to chat about the Christian faith.

Café worship on the first Sunday of each month. Breakfast from 10.00, with worship at 10.30. This is an informal service, so please make yourself at home. Drinks are available at any time.

Wednesdays at 10 am: Midweek service followed by coffee.

Activities for Children and Young People

New members are welcome at these activities at the church.

Contact the named person for more details.

For younger children

Crèche	0-3	Sun 10.30 am	Ruth	2686507
Sparklers	4-5	Sun 10.30 am	Ruth	2686507
Sunbeams	0-4	Wed 9.15-12noon	Katie	07464 824462

For children and young people

Sparks	5-11	Sun 10.30 am	John	2307556
Fireworks	12-14	Sun 10.30 am	Emma	07707 500226
Sunday Club	15-18	Sun 10.30 am	Sue	2307556
Girls' Brigade	5-18	Thurs evening	Marian	2361316
Lighthouse	5-11	Wed 3.45 pm	Cherry	07853278612
Lampstand	12-18	Fri 8-10 pm	Cherry	07853278612
Craft Services	3-12	Festivals	Sue	2307556
Drama group	All ages	Various	Glenn	2351057
Pantomime	All ages	Annually	Glenn	2351057
Musical	All ages	Special events	Christèle	07912207661
Holiday Club	4-11	August 2020	Lesley	2686461

Friendship Club Programme:

Tuesdays at 2 pm in the Church Hall (enter by side door opposite the shops). A warm welcome awaits any who would like to come – especially men and women over 60.

Tues 3rd Dec	Brass Band
Tues 10th Dec	Olive's Choir
Tues 7th Jan	Hats: Rosemary Beney
Tues 14th Jan	HARC...A talk by Julie Roberts
Tues 21st Jan	My Year as Lord Mayor by Sylvia Dunkley
Tues 28th Jan	Eliza's Story by Suzanne Bingham

For more information contact Pat 0114 2497280 or Jackie Smith 0114 3483069

Contact Details:

For pastoral matters: Rev Graham Wassell
Tel. 0114 2350393

Minister: Rev Tim Crome

Tel. 0114 4389012

Email: Tim47Crome@msn.com

Youth Minister: Cherry Mair

Tel 07853 278612

For Room Bookings contact:

Peter Larder Tel. 0114 2686507

Church website:

www.bentsgreenmethodist.org.uk

Church office answerphone: 0114 2361912

Regular church activities

Games, chat, crafts

Wednesdays 12.30 to 3 pm in the church.
Indoor bowling, scrabble, chess, dominoes, jigsaws and cards, knitting and crafts.
Contact Ruth: 0114 2686507

Coffee Mornings in the Church:

On the first Saturday of every month
from 10.30 am – 12noon

Harbour Coffee

On Wednesdays in term-time from 3.30 – 5.45 pm in the Music Room

Tea, Toast & Time 4 Thinking:

Thursdays @ 10.30 am each week. Upstairs in the Church Lounge.

A time to reflect on what following Jesus is all about. A place for all those seeking answers. Carers of young children especially welcome.
Contact Sue: Tel 0114 2307556

House groups

Many people in the church belong to a house group and meet regularly to pray together, read the bible and talk about the Christian faith. If you are interested in joining a house group contact Sue: Tel 0114 2307556

Hilltop Editor:

Tricia North, Email: tn-bg@live.co.uk

Please send material for the next issue to the editor by **Sunday 20th January 2020.**

If you would like to receive **Hilltop** by email please email the editor: tn-bg@live.co.uk

Porter Valley Dementia Café offers a social afternoon with snacks and refreshments, a range of activities and relevant speakers and guests. It is for people with dementia who live in their own homes, and for their families and carers. It is held on the first and third Thursdays of the month from 2-4 pm in the church.



The Children's Choir singing in a service, Christmas 2017

The choir will be taking part in the Carol Service and the Christingle this year as well as on Sunday 15th Dec. We look forward to hearing them again.

Music at Friendship Club This autumn has certainly been a time of music at Friendship Club. First of all we had The Yorkshire Teabags who are, basically, a skiffle band....they played lots of the songs that we all know from the 50's and 60's and we were all given an instrument to shake! Bob played the washboard! It was great fun and we all joined in.

For the music we make together in
Christ's name;
for those who compose and conduct it,
who play and perform it:
that the glory of God may be heard in it.

We don't normally have an introduction like this, "As seen on TV" when Brian welcomed Amy Evans. She was recommended to us by Brian Coates and she has entertained us twice now. Again, she sings songs that we all know, and she dances as well. She is a delightful entertainer. We look forward to seeing her again in 2020. Next came Ann Beedham and her super Ukulele band.... another favourite! Bents Green Singers came after that and gave us a lovely afternoon with their beautiful music. Later Buskin Buddies came to entertain us, a very talented band who come every year. After that was Anne Fotheringham, another of our favourites. In December we finish off the year with our annual Brass Band and, for our Christmas celebrations, the lovely Olive's choir to entertain us.

We are very fortunate to have so much talent in the area and we are always well entertained by these musicians who are now our friends. They always say how welcome they're made to feel at Bents Green.

Do join us on Tuesday afternoons at 2 o'clock. You too will be made most welcome. **Pat Hutchinson**

If each of us
were not
meant
then each an
illegal immigrant.

If each of us
were meant
then each a
sacrament.

Drink from the
chalice of
oblation
live as an
obligation.

James Ogden



It is not this planet
that is at risk
the Creation
old enough
to look after itself
with numerous
tricks and assists
- it is us
the Creature
vulnerable to the
vengeance
of overpowered
nature.

James Ogden