



# *The Westgate Chronicle*

**The Magazine of Westgate New Church  
Issue 473: Advent and Christmas 2017**

Westgate New Church, Peterborough  
*United Reformed/Methodist*  
68b Westgate, Peterborough, PE1 1RG  
Minister: The Revd Lesley Moseley  
Minister: 01733 751681  
<http://www.westgatechurch.org.uk/>



**The Church  
where you belong**

## Our Mission Statement

We at Westgate New Church are called by God to highlight  
Jesus Christ's love for the people of Peterborough.

We pass on this good news by worship, fellowship, mission, education,  
personal life and social service.

This will be my final letter to you in the Chronicle as we know it. Sadly, this is Linda's last edition as editor and no one has come forward to take over that role. Some of the functions of the church magazine will continue in different forms. For example, Ewan will continue to prepare rotas and will distribute them to those on the rota and to church notice boards. Weekly notice sheets will continue to give details of diary and prayer requests.



Church Council have spent a lot of time discussing what we can do and continue to try to work out a plan. At our recent meeting I reminded them of something I've said before in that and other contexts. The Scottish Episcopal Church developed a strategy called local collaborative ministry. Their churches were presented with two rules as part of the strategy: no one has two jobs till everyone has one and if no one comes forward to do a job ask the question, 'Does God want this job doing?'

We believe that the Chronicle serves

many functions. It keeps us in touch with friends who have moved away, it keeps us informed, it helps us to develop a sense of our identity as a community and, no doubt, other things I've not included. Those functions still need to be undertaken; our challenge is

how we can do that without a formal monthly publication. Church Council are always pleased to hear ideas about how we can be more effective as a church and as disciples. We are even more pleased if you can offer to help with some of the tasks.

Meanwhile, what is happening in Advent and at Christmas? An Advent study group has been arranged. Doug Stevens, Alison and I will lead sessions looking at the prophecies of Isaiah, which provide the Old Testament Readings during Advent this year. The group will meet from 2pm – 4pm on Thursdays beginning on November 30th. The group will be people who want to learn more. You don't need to have been to a group before, you don't need to know

anything at all before you arrive at the first session and there's no book to buy. We'll try to make the afternoons interesting and will give you a cuppa before you go home. Each session will stand alone so you can come to as many or as few as you wish.

Our services in December will include a toy service on 10th December, a carol service on 24<sup>th</sup> December and an afternoon Blue Christmas service on 3rd too. I'm often asked what a blue Christmas service is. It is designed for people who struggle with Christmas, who may be sad, lonely or unwell. It provides a space to quietly reflect without mince pies and bright lights and flashy reindeer antlers! You will be welcomed even if

you're not 'blue'. Our family celebration on Christmas morning is an opportunity to share the joy of Christmas with our Westgate New family. Please come and share in this lovely, warm and friendly service.

Finally, I want to say thank you for Linda and the team, who have put together the Chronicle for more years than I've been at Westgate New Church. It has provided us with a regular bumper edition of useful information, teaching and news. We will miss the Chronicle, and wish Linda all the best in her new ventures. Thank you to her and all the team.

In Christ

*Lesley*

---

## FROM YOUR RETIRING EDITOR

Dear Friends,

The time has come for me to retire as your editor and this is the last issue I shall edit. Ian and I have now got to a stage in life when we are able to downsize, certainly in terms of house size, and probably in terms of town size. We shall begin house hunting after Christmas. The process may all be over in a few months or it could take a year or more, so we have at present no idea how much longer we shall be with Westgate New Church. In any case, I shall no longer have the time it takes to edit the Chronicle and, besides, I have been editor for nine years and two months (110 issues) and this is long enough for one editor.

At present the Church Council, who were given due notice, have not been able to find a new editor. Maybe, after an interval it will be easier for someone to re-start a completely different Chronicle (rather than trying to pick up where I left



off) or even find a completely different way of communicating with our congregation, former members, friends and visitors.

You will also find some differences in this issue. The Church Council have put their minds to reducing the excessive work-load which is carried by some of our members and have identified the colouring page, the puzzles and the rotas as items that can be dispensed with, so these do not appear in this issue. You will also, no doubt, be hearing about other work-saving arrangements before long.

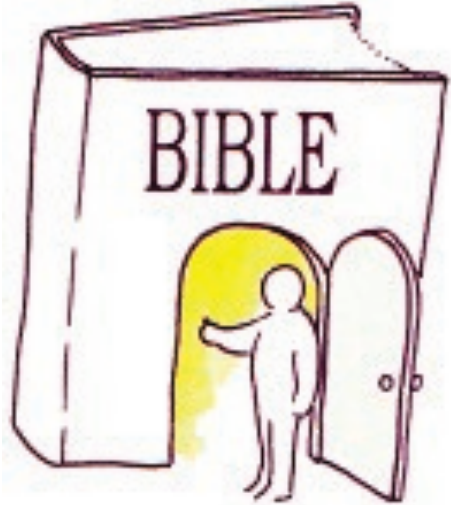
I want to thank you all for reading the Chronicle, for your financial contributions towards the cost and for what you have written for our magazine. For those who have at any time served on the editorial team, helped to find advertisements or helped with distribution, a very special thank you for making my work easier.

God bless you all,

*Linda*

# STORIES WITHIN THE STORY: THE BIG STORY

*"A book full of stories" – this phrase coined by Maria Penstone in a Victorian hymn reflects the approach I have taken over five years of writing "Stories within the Story" for the Chronicle. Every page of the Bible has a story to tell, stories about everyday people just as often as about the great ones like prophets and monarchs. I have found you can make friends with all these people by dwelling on their stories and imagining how they would tell their stories themselves. Usually stories can be retold in the first person, as by the character him or herself.*



## Stories

Big stories like Israel fleeing from Egypt or building the first temple – the seminal event of Solomon's reign  
A whole nation responding to God's call which came to just a few, who inspired or led many others

Small stories, barely mentioned in the biblical text

But life-changing: sometimes a divine call, sometimes circumstances that open a life to God

Like Simon of Cyrene who carried Jesus' cross and his two sons – a family history in one verse

Sometimes stories we can imagine are not in the Bible account.

How did the donkey get back home after bearing Jesus on Palm Sunday?

I have imagined a boy from the farm and an extraordinary day out.

How did Jesus know so much about the life of shepherds?

I imagine a shepherd knowing our Lord from Bethlehem-nativity to Calvary to early church.

Bible stories are not often about people seeking God

except perhaps for Job amid the ruin of his once-prosperous life.

Bible stories are usually about God seeking us, finding us, calling us:

Moses at the ever-burning bush  
Paul on the Damascus road  
Nathanael, under a fig tree

People who become extraordinary when God calls

Many Bible stories are about strong, extraordinary women

Eve, mother of us all, sassy and ambitious;

Mary, mother of Jesus, unexpectedly pregnant, obedient and politically astute;



Another Mary, first to meet the risen Lord, deeply devoted;  
Sarah, not afraid to laugh at God;  
Ruth, immigrant but royal great-grandmother, faithful and focused.

But the high point of Bible stories will always be stories of Jesus.

Human stories: a helpless, endangered baby,  
a rebellious teenager lost in Jerusalem,  
a dutiful son saving the occasion at a family wedding in Cana,  
an anguished man in the Garden, facing arrest and death;  
And Divine stories, the God-man bringing healing and hope,  
restoring life and health, walking on water and feeding the crowds,  
dying for his friends, and enemies, and multitudes yet to come;  
raised in glory, LORD Jesus.

Stories human and divine;  
Stories of God seeking us in love, of people responding in faith;  
Stories bringing inspiration for us.

*The Bible is the Big Story of God seeking and finding us throughout history. The Big Story encompasses numerous little stories – "stories within the story" about remarkable individuals. It often requires a large dose of imagination, but we can dwell upon the little stories and let them speak to us, we can retell the stories as if from the mouths of the characters themselves. That is what I have tried to do in "Stories within the Story", and this is a way of doing Bible Study we can all make use of. Try it.*

*Ian*



---

## A CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE

### **Advent**

Advent is a period of four weeks leading up to Christmas Day. During this time, when everyone is busy with shopping and other preparations for Christmas, Christians instead try to make this a quieter time of prayer and reflection in preparation for Jesus the Saviour coming into our world and our hearts. There are often special services with candles on the advent wreath being lit, Sunday by Sunday. The shopping does get done as well, it is just not central.

### **Christmas**

Similarly Christmas is not mainly about Santa, cards, presents and eating and drinking, possibly to excess. It centres more on the birth of



Jesus our Saviour and on worship. We think more of the results of Jesus coming into our world, God showing humanity what God is all about. We would not be celebrating Christmas if it were not for Jesus' teaching and healing, death and resurrection. There are often carol services, the singing illustrating the story of Jesus' birth as it is told in the Bible and a service on Christmas morning to give thanks for the very first Christmas present, Jesus himself, given to humans by a loving God.

However, don't get the wrong idea. We do find time for cards, presents, food and drink as well. It's just that, amid all the jollity, we do try to keep the reason for the celebration in mind.

# FRANK HOUGHTON (1894-1972)

It appears this may be my last contribution on hymn writers in probably the last edition of the 'Chronicle' due out for December 2017. I would like to thank Elsie Houghton's book 'Christian Hymn Writers' as the source of my contributions and in this regard I will use the last chapter of the book which incidentally is about a hymn writer with the same surname as the author and I think it is fitting to choose this hymn writer who was also a poet and a missionary and wrote a hymn about the Incarnation of Christ when Christians all over the world will soon celebrate Christmas.

The writer was Frank Houghton and the hymn is 'Thou Who Wast Rich Beyond All Splendour,' and the second verse

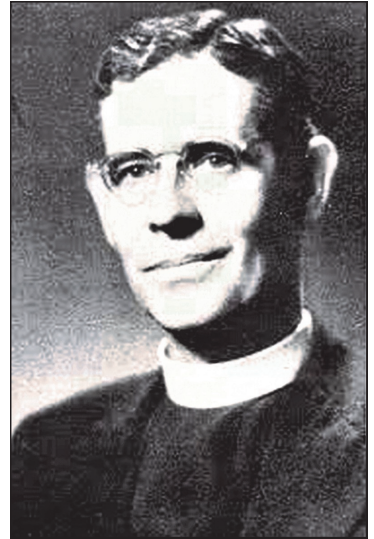
'Thou Who had love beyond all telling,  
Saviour and King we worship Thee.  
Immanuel within us dwelling. . .'

Unfortunately the hymn is not in our hymn book, 'Singing The Faith,' but it can be found in Anglican Church hymn books.

Frank Houghton was born in April 24 1894 at Stafford in Staffordshire, England. His father was Thomas Houghton, curate of Stafford. Frank attended and graduated from the University of London. He was ordained a deacon in 1918 and served as curate at Liverpool and Preston until 1920.

Inspired by the missionary work of Hudson Taylor, founder of the 'China Missionary Mission', he decided to join the mission and sailed to China in November 1920. In 1923 he married Dorothy, one of the daughters of Bishop Cassels of West China. He soon became principal of the Theological College of Paoning, Szechwan .

Frank and Dorothy returned to England on leave, but he was soon made the editor of the Mission's paper 'China's Millions, a job he held' for nine years. Meanwhile missionary work in China was becoming dangerous and despite this



Frank accepted a new challenge as Bishop of East Szechwan and returned to China in 1937. Unfortunately war broke out between China and Japan and also in Europe, but despite the instability he became the Mission's General Director in 1940. When the Japanese entered the second World War after the Pearl Harbour attack many missionaries were interned and missionary work became more dangerous.

When the Second World War ended in the Pacific and Europe, stability was broken once more with the arrival of the Communist Revolution and in 1949 Shanghai fell to the Communists and the missionaries withdrew. Frank and his wife returned to England to do some pastoral work but in 1963 he retired due to ill health and died on January 25 1972.

*Manny*

Source : 1) Christian Hymn Writers: Elsie Houghton, 2) 'Wikipedia'

# ADVENT, CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR FOR WESTGATE NEW CHURCH



Four Thursdays from Nov 30th  
at church, room may vary  
2-4pm

## **Advent Study Group**

Looking at the prophecies of Isaiah

Every Sunday  
10:30 a.m.

## **Morning Service**

themes suitable for the time of year

Saturday 2nd December  
10:00—3.30 at the Cathedral

## **CTiCP Advent Reflection Day**

led by The Right Rev Bernard Longley  
Roman Catholic Archbishop of Birmingham  
Bring a packed lunch

Places must be booked in advance:  
contact Denise Thomas on 01733 564899  
or email [office@peterborough-stmarys.org.uk](mailto:office@peterborough-stmarys.org.uk)

Sunday December 3rd  
4:30 p.m.

## **Blue Christmas Service**

Especially suitable for those who are  
grieving or have sad memories associated  
with Christmas,  
but also of general interest

Saturday December 9th  
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.  
in Cathedral Square

## **Christmas Alive 2013**

### **CTiCP**

Carol singing, Christmas Tracts, balloons,  
invitations, puppets, chocolates  
Encouraging the public to celebrate the  
real meaning of Christmas  
Volunteers to help welcome

Sunday December 10th  
10:30 a.m.

## **Toy Service**

Bring along a wrapped present  
for a child in hospital  
(All presents must be brand new for  
health reasons, so will be checked by staff  
before distribution)

Sunday December 24th  
10:30 a.m.

## **Carol Service**



Monday December 25th

## **Family Service for Christmas Morning**

Sunday 31st December  
6:30 p.m. at the Cathedral  
**Hope4Peterborough**  
inter-denominational celebration service.

Sunday 7th January  
10:30 a.m.

## **Covenant Service**

Remembering God's promises to us and  
renewing our promises to God

Sunday 7th January  
4:30 p.m.

## **Cafe Worship with Holy Communion**

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME  
AT ALL THESE EVENTS**

# RETIRING COLLECTION – ROHINGYA

The retiring collection for Christian Aid's Rohingya Crisis Appeal followed the service led by Des Kellard on October 22nd. We are pleased to announce that it raised

# £128

## The Crisis

Escalating violence in Myanmar's Rakhine State in late August 2017 has forced hundreds of thousands of people from their homes, including many Rohingya refugees who have fled to Bangladesh, fearing for their lives. More than 500,000 Rohingya people have crossed the border into Bangladesh and unknown numbers remain displaced in Myanmar. As villages in Myanmar continue to be destroyed, figures are expected to rise, with up to 15,000 people crossing the border each day.

Those fleeing to the border have walked for miles, and for days on end. They have no money for food or shelter. Many mothers are escaping with newborn babies. With limited medical facilities, people are sick and at risk of serious disease.



## A prayer provided by Christian Aid

God who hurts with humanity,  
we lift up our voices  
and pour out our hearts to You,  
in sadness, grief and disbelief  
at the devastating violence  
forcing so many people  
from their homes in Myanmar.  
Listening to stories of villages being  
burned,  
families being torn apart  
and people fleeing for their lives;  
we pray they will find places of safety  
to take refuge.

Reading reports of people walking for  
days  
across difficult terrain,  
of bodies arriving weary with sickness,  
hunger and thirst;  
we pray for deep rest and more food  
and medicines to help them heal.

Strengthen the Christian Aid partners  
already at work.

Give them the access they need  
to reach displaced people in  
Bangladesh and Myanmar;  
provide more funding so they can  
provide more help.

And may our listening, hearing and  
reading  
move us all to make a generous  
response.  
in your merciful name we pray,  
Amen.

*Information and prayer from: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/emergencies/prayer-rohingya-appeal>*

## JUST FOR FUN

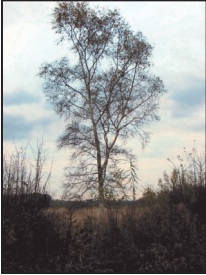
**A BAD WORKMAN ALWAYS BLAMES HIS FOOLS . . . STUPID KEYBOARD!**



*Sent in  
by the  
Editor's  
Grandson.*



# WONDERS OF CREATION: AUTUMN COLOURS



A few pictures  
from the editor's  
collection.





# WESTGATE NEW CHURCH NEWS

On October 29th we held a **Church Anniversary Service** to mark one year since we moved into our new home. The theme was **God's love and how we respond to it**. The service followed a



similar format to the moving service (though without the procession), with all of our ministers, preachers and worship leaders taking part. Megan led the call to worship, Ian and Linda led prayers, Audrey introduced the theme, Des received the offering and led the benediction, Doug preached and Lesley and Alison administered communion.

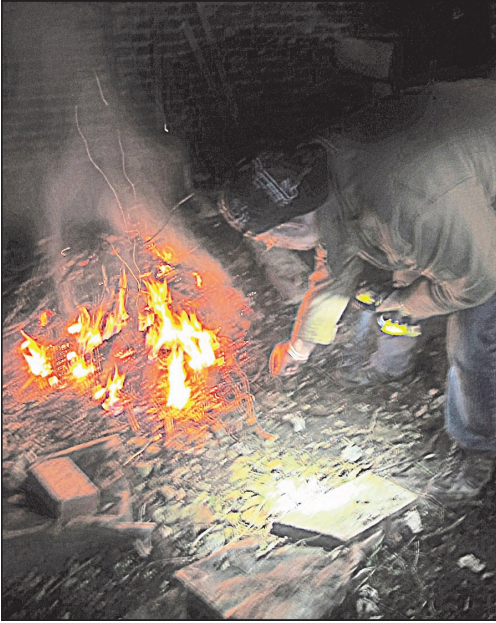
An extra during this service was the presentation of a certificate and flowers to Des, who is retiring after having been a preacher for 60 years, 50 of them while he has been at Westgate and Westgate New Church. The picture shows him leading worship on a previous occasion, with Des himself as the insert. We congratulate Des on a remarkable achievement and thank him for all his contributions to our worship.



The **War Memorials** which came from Wentworth Street Methodist Church to Westgate Church have now been remounted in Westgate New Church and we thank Phil and Trevor who carried out this work in good time for the Remembrance

Sunday Service this year. We have now been able to send this information and picture off so that the Register of War Memorials can be updated. The larger memorial relates to the First World War and the smaller to the Second.

# WESTGATE NEW CHURCH NEWS



On November 4th a **Bonfire Party** was held; the date, we were assured, having nothing to do with Guy Fawkes and a lot to do with clearing away rubbish before work starts in earnest on the garden behind the church, which is planned to happen during November. The work is to be carried out by the Groundwork Team, who will use it as a training opportunity, assisted by some willing volunteers from the congregation.

At the party we had soup and sparklers outside by the fire, then moved inside to enjoy bangers and mash with mushy peas or baked beans and then apple pie. We thank our kind cooks for this meal, Terry for providing sparklers and Roger (Moseley) who was in charge of the fire. We left with

fuller stomachs and an emptier garden. We trust that by the time you read this, the garden will be looking much smarter.





## STILL SINGING



On Tuesday 7th November the choir went to a new venue for us at Kingfisher Court so we were not sure how many residents would be there or how they would react to the songs we were going to sing to them. So 20 members of the choir arrived to find a good number ready and waiting.

This report will be a bit shorter than some others as we were singing the same programme that we used in September at Farcet Church and was included in the October Chronicle.

We were made very welcome and, as the songs mostly are quite well known, the residents joined in the singing. The concert went very well, finishing by 2.45, which gave the residents time for some other forms of entertainment, but not before a welcome cup of tea and the odd biscuit or two.

The concert was the last one of general songs for this year, as we now go on to give our rendition of Christmas Songs and Carols. The main performance will be at Yaxley Methodist Church, Friday Dec 15th at 7.30 where the charge is £5 for adults, but free to under 16's. If you want to come along, see Trevor for a ticket or two. As the Church is quite small we have to have an idea of the numbers.

We have two other concerts which will be performed at residential homes around Peterborough. *Trevor*

## UNUSUAL NATIVITY SCENE



Here is a larger version of the picture on p9, which shows that the figures are carved from wood. It was taken by Phil outside the URC and Methodist Church in Bellingham, Northumberland, while visiting his sister last year. Is that a Dalek on the right? That isn't how Jesus arrived!

This is the JPIT briefing ahead of the Universal Credit debate, posted on 18th October 2017 by Paul Morrison.

Universal Credit will be debated in Parliament today and the JPIT churches have sent a briefing to every MP outlining our concerns. The briefing outlines some of the key problems, but the central message is simple: Universal Credit's processes suit the lives of the relatively well-off, the people who designed it, but fails to take into account the lives of real people struggling against poverty.

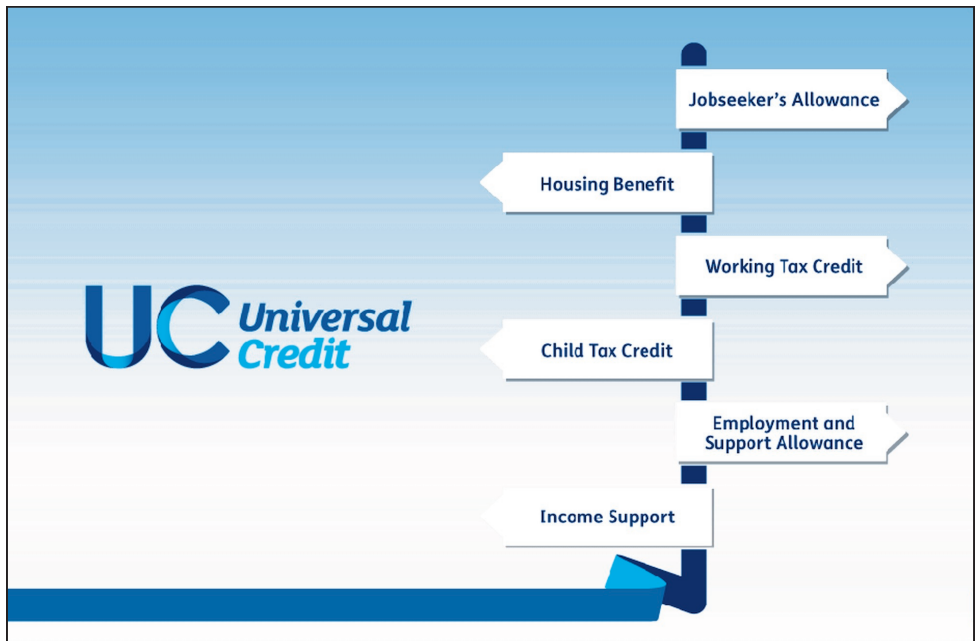
The benefit's design assumes people have six weeks's living expenses in the bank, have internet access and IT skills. All of this is the norm for some sections

of society but for others it is miles away from where they are. Universal Credit needs to be able to serve these people and currently it doesn't – instead it pitches them into debt, rent arrears and Foodbank use.

What has been surprising is the number of churches, ministers and others that have contacted JPIT about Universal Credit. The level of concern is huge and because Universal Credit is so complex and all-encompassing, the sheer variety of problems is enormous.

Universal Credit is going to happen. It has some good aspects, but it needs substantial changes before it proceeds. If you have stories of Universal Credit from your area – good or bad – we would love to hear them. *(JPIT Praxis, October)*

*You may not know that this is to be rolled out in Peterborough in December and it may affect our Foodbanks. Editor*



Universal Credit combines six benefits into one.

# FROM THE METHODIST CIRCUIT

This quarter a letter was sent out with the Methodist plan.

First it drew attention to the Cathedral worship on New Year's Eve. We have included this in the list of events on p9.

The second section has as its title *Remembering and Praying for our Midweek Services and Fellowship Activities*. It stresses that these may have equal importance with Sunday activities.

Finally it talks about fasting. This is not about fasting as you may know it – it is rather about giving something up, not necessarily food, to make more time for prayer. It is suggested you might do this in the first week of each month.

If anyone would like a copy of the full letter, please ask Linda.



The following are the provided prayer suggestions.

**Making disciples:** pray that we would remember what Jesus has commanded us to do.

**Inviting newcomers:** pray for those (including yourself) who will invite others to new events.

**Discerning direction:** pray for our groups as they question how God is calling them to grow.

**Waiting on God:** pray that we work at God's pace rather than our own.

**Experiencing God:** pray for an outpouring of God's Holy Spirit to convict, comfort, and counsel.

**Enabling people:** pray for God to give us the resources we need, and the grace to enable others.

**Knowing God:** pray that we will reflect on God's faithfulness in the past.

---

## SCAMWATCH

Action Fraud reports that bogus bailiffs are requesting payments for a "phantom" debt. You are cold-called by a false 'bailiff' supposedly working for a court, trying to recover funds for a non-existent debt. The caller wants payment by bank transfer and if refused, will threaten to visit to recover the debt. Businesses and individuals are targeted. Though this can occur throughout the UK, many calls are being made from the Yorkshire area.

### Tips for staying safe:

Confirm what the debt is; bailiffs are only for debts such as council tax, child support and compensation orders. Others are collected by debt collectors, who do not have the same legal powers or have court authorisation to act. (See Citizens' Advice website).

If you work for a business and are

called or visited by bailiffs or debt collectors, speak with your manager or business owner. Never pay debts for the business; some fraudsters ask employees to, suggesting they can be reimbursed by the employer, yet there is no debt.

Check with the court or company that the call is legitimate; On a landline make sure you hear the dialling tone as the caller could stay on the line and you could be asking a fraudster to confirm a non-existent debt. Never use a number from the caller without checking it. Get details of a debt in writing. Do not be rushed or intimidated into making a quick decision.

You can report suspicious calls like these to Action Fraud on [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or by calling 0300 123 2040.

*Shortened email from ActionFraud*



# URC EAST MIDLANDS SYNOD



On October 14th Lesley and Linda, with the two representatives from Whittlesey, attended an East Midlands Synod meeting at Sherwood URC, Nottingham (below).

As always, the meeting opened with worship led by the host church. It is inspiring to have occasional opportunities to worship with such a large group.

The rest of the morning was taken up with necessary business. I didn't notice anything that should cause us concern that wasn't revisited in the afternoon.

We were given a paper on and a talk about the deployment of the reduced number of ministers we are likely to have in 2025, estimated as eighteen for the whole synod. This will involve ministers being used in very different ways, maybe called by the synod rather than individual churches or pastorates, and much more use of lay people. Using Resource Churches and Resource Ministers was suggested. Resource Churches would be expected to share the talents of their lay people with nearby churches. They would have the majority of a minister's time, the rest being allocated to other churches. A Resource Minister would be called to an area rather than a church or pastorate and would be available to

churches according to their needs at any one time to enable them to fulfil their mission. Special appointments such as Training and Development Officers would still be available. All these people would be used flexibly according to the needs of the area.

Rev'd John Proctor, General Secretary of the URC, who had worked with the young people in the morning, led a session on *Harvest of Hopes and Dreams*. In groups we were asked to produce a statement of our hopes and dreams for the church, each under a particular heading, in only 20 words. This was quite difficult. The statements were collected up for use in planning.

John then spoke to us at length, with a reference to the Letters to the Churches at the beginning of Revelation. I will try to list some of the main points.

It is easy for churches to become despondent, but we need to recover confidence, believe in a future with Christ. This is Christian Hope.

We should 'keep an eye on the edges'. Lost and suffering people matter.

Like the bus driver who accelerated as London bridge began to open, we must take leaps of faith.

Living water is like underground rivers. Churches need to find their forgotten resources beneath the surface.

Reformed churches believe that scripture stimulates change, in the priesthood of all believers and that there is no split between the sacred and secular. We must learn from God to love one another and go forward with hopes and dreams.

Linda



# CHARITY NEWS

**Selections from the many emails  
your editor has received**

*There is evidence here that our money  
and our petitions do help.*



## FREEDOMUNITED

**FreedomUnited** have written to say: We have great news to share about our campaign to end forced labour in Qatar! This week, Qatar made major public commitments to reform the kafala system and uphold worker rights in a three-year plan to achieve decent work conditions for all migrant workers in the country. We commend Qatar for taking significant steps toward ending modern slavery, but we know there is still much work ahead to ensure that workers in Qatar do not face exploitation.

Indonesia's parliament has passed a landmark new law on the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers (PPILN), reports The Jakarta Post. The new law comes after years of campaigning by migrant worker rights groups, including Freedom United's partner Migrant Care, to end exploitation and modern slavery. It revises an older law No. 39/2004 on the Placement and Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers.

*Then later:* The International Labour Organization (ILO) has dropped its investigation into Qatar's treatment of foreign workers — many of whom are working to build facilities for the upcoming 2022 World Cup. The decision follows Qatar's promises of reform, including changes that would allow workers freedom to leave the country and change jobs without their employer's permission and establish a minimum wage without discrimination and a fund to guarantee unpaid wages.

**TheirWorld** write: Do you know how to build an app? Or write the lines of code to create a website? The need for these digital skills is growing – and children especially will need to learn them if they are going to thrive in the future jobs market. This week, at the tender age of ten, an Australian schoolboy has been addressing the World Youth Forum in Egypt on coding and leadership. In developing countries, millions of children are playing catch-up – that's why Theirworld developed the innovative Code Clubs for girls in several African countries.

Children should always feel safe at school. They should never have to run screaming in fear and confusion, like the kids who fled their kindergarten in Syria this week. A shocking video showed them scrambling down a smoke-filled street in the town of Kfar Batna in Eastern Ghouta after their school was hit by a shell. Just two days later, five children were killed when a missile landed at the gate of their school in nearby Jisreen. Classrooms and children have been the target of many attacks since the Syrian conflict began more than six years ago. It would be bad enough if this was just happening in Syria – but it's not.

Attacks on schools, the recruitment of child soldiers and the abuse of children in war zones goes on all over the world. That's why the United Nations Security Council held a special meeting on children and armed conflict this week and called for urgent action to protect children and their education.



**Mercy Corps** tell us: A decade ago natural disaster was the driver of 80% of the world's humanitarian needs. Today a human-made disaster is the leading cause – conflict. There is no one simple solution to famine. Food insecurity and hunger look different in every instance. However, it is no coincidence that Yemen, South Sudan, Somalia and Nigeria are all embroiled in violent conflict. We cannot solve hunger until we address the larger problems that drive it such as conflict, poverty, poor health and weak governance.

### Learn More At. . .

[www.freedomunited.org](http://www.freedomunited.org)

[theirworld.org](http://theirworld.org)

[www.mercycorps.org.uk](http://www.mercycorps.org.uk)

[www.womankind.org.uk](http://www.womankind.org.uk)



**Womankind** report: On October 15th, we celebrated the International Day of Rural Women, honouring the strength, resilience and achievements of rural and indigenous women. At Womankind, we're always inspired by the rural women we support and the women's rights organisations and movements that work to advance their rights.

In Ethiopia, where more than 80% of the population live in rural areas, we are working with our partner, Siiqqee, to support marginalised rural women to come together in self-help groups.

After experiencing sexual violence, Dekituu found the Gindo self-help group. Through the group Dekituu has grown in confidence, learnt to run her own business and is now sharing her experiences to help other women. Read her story on the website.

This month, we also launch our latest report, Standing with the Changemakers.



## CHRISTMAS CRACKERS



How will Christmas dinner be different after Brexit? No Brussels.

What do workers at Sports Direct get for Christmas dinner? About five minutes.

How do you recognise a Christmas tree from BHS? All the branches have gone.

What is David Cameron's favourite Christmas song? All I Want For Christmas is EU.

Why has Hillary Clinton asked Santa for a 23-letter alphabet? Because she is sick of F.B.I.

Why are Jeremy Corbyn's Christmas cards on the floor? His cabinet collapsed.

Philip looks out of the window on

Christmas Eve: 'That's some reindeer' he says. The Queen replies: '63 years. Yes, that is a lot.'

What is the difference between the clementine in your Christmas stocking and Donald Trump? Nothing, they're both a little orange.

What do you get if you cross Donald Trump with a Christmas Carol? O Comb Over Ye Faithful.

Why did the three wise men only have frankincense and myrrh? Because Team GB took all the gold.

I can't get to the chocolates in my advent calendar. Foiled again.

# COINCIDENCES IN MALDON

On Thursday 26th October June and I went on a bus trip to Maldon, Essex, which was Robbie's stamping ground when he was younger\*. We set off at 9am from the Boat House and made good progress so we were able to



have a coffee stop part way there, arriving at the bus park before noon. To our surprise there was another coach already in the park which belonged to a company we used to use whilst we lived in Scunthorpe, and on the walk down to the quayside met up with the owner and had a chat with him and his wife about the trip that they were on. (See footnote).

We arrived at the Jolly Sailor well in advance of the time our meal was to be served, so had plenty of time get to know our other passengers on the trip. It was a very good meal.

On the way back to the bus we stopped to talk with one of the bargees who was checking over his barge. He told us that it was made in the 1930's and was still use regularly today for local trips and for trips down the Thames all the way into London.

The main object of our trip was a visit to Tiptree Jam Factory where we given a talk about it's history and how it had developed over its life. Our visit ended with a cream tea much bigger than most of us could eat after the good meal mentioned earlier so we asked the waitresses if we could have some containers to take home what we could not eat.

We set off for home at about 5.15pm for an uneventful ride home.

Footnote: Whilst we were talking with the owner of the other coach he suggested that we might know some of his passengers, not knowing how true this statement was to turn out.

We have just been up to Scunthorpe to stay with one of our close friends for the weekend and during conversation one mentioned that she had been on a trip to Maldon and other places in Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex with the other bus company and that it was the same one that we had seen, so the owners comment was very true. It was a pity that we did not have time to explore the town otherwise we could well have met up.

*June and Trevor*

\*Also, I believe, Jane's! In addition I grew up in Colchester, just twelve miles from Maldon, which we often visited. There was a good swimming pool in the park and we often walked along the river to see the sailing barges, which also came up the River Colne into Colchester. It was always a mystery to me that we never saw them move!

*Linda*

# NATIONAL ROOF OVER YOUR HEAD DAY: 3RD DECEMBER



National Roof Over Your Head Day is a day that is celebrated in USA but one I feel but would not be a bad thing if it crossed the water and was celebrated in Britain.

The day highlights the number of homeless people and the lack of housing. Most of us who will be reading this will have a warm place to go home to each night, a roof over our heads, food and lights; others are not so lucky. This day is to remind people how blessed we all are.

We may moan about the cost of utility bills, mortgages, rent and so on and, yes, for some it is really hard to make ends meet, but we do have a home we can call our own.

The day was started as a response to the number of homeless people, even in highly developed countries. It brings awareness that there are so many people who do not have this basic need. It is a call to charity and social awareness.

The recommended way to help on this day is to get out and start a solution to the homeless problem, aware that there are not many people who could actually

afford to house the homeless, but take steps to motivate leaders to do it. Donate to charities or give food and clothing to a homeless person.

This may be an American Day but this issue is global, in the United Kingdom it is on the increase, if you are not able to donate to charities please write to your MP or go to websites such as Shelter who will give you ideas as to how you can help. For worldwide Christian Aid, Oxfam and such like which show the impact of lack of housing due to famine, war and ethnic cleansing.

On this day give pray and thanks for the roof over your head and pray for others who are not so fortunate.

## 2nd December 2017:



**International Day to Abolish Slavery:** we have mentioned this day in previous years, but please continue

to remember it in your prayers.

## 10th December 2017:

**Worldwide Candle Lighting Day:** light a candle to remember those loved ones who are no longer with us.



*Compiled by Brenda*



## 1st–7th December

Churches: St. Andrew's (URC),  
Dogsthorpe (Methodist)\*

Events: CTiCP Advent Refection Day\*  
(2nd), Blue Christmas Service\* (3rd),  
Events mentioned on p21\* and the  
bottom of p23\*

People: People for whom this  
Christmas will be overshadowed by  
grief\*, people who will be homeless at  
Christmas\*

Special Request: use the prayer  
suggestions on p 16 (Fast and Pray)\*



## 8th–14th December

Churches: All Saints (CofE),  
Orton Waterville (Methodist)

Events: Christmas Alive\* (9th), Toy  
Service\* (10th)

People: Rohingya refugees\* people  
waiting for Universal Credit\*

Organisations: Christian Aid\*,  
Foodbank\*, Peterborough City  
Hospital, especially children in hospital  
at Christmas\*

Give thanks: For being able to help  
people less fortunate than ourselves\*



# DECEMBER PRAYER PROMPTS



## 15th–21st December

Churches: All Souls (RC),  
Oundle (Methodist)

Events: Advent Study Group\*

People: your friends at church and  
the people you meet day by day or  
week by week outside church

Organisations: Charities mentioned on  
p15\*, Joint Public Issues Team\*

Give thanks: For the wonders of  
Creation\*, for the ability to go out and  
enjoy them

## 22nd–31st December

Churches: Peterborough Cathedral  
(CofE), Southside (Methodist)

Events: Carol Service\* (24th),  
Christmas Day Service\* (25th),  
Hope4Peterborough Service\* (31st)

People: the people we only hear from  
at Christmas time

Organisations: Our Methodist Circuit\*  
and URC Synod\*

Give thanks: for the gift of Jesus at  
Christmas\*

The Churches mentioned are taken from the Methodist Circuit and from a list of Churches in CTiCP and other churches with whom we have a close association. \*Further information elsewhere in the magazine \*\* See Diary on next page

# DECEMBER DIARY

*Tuesdays, 10.30: Pause for Prayer in Walsingham*

*First Tuesday in the month, 2.30: at Park Road Baptist Church:*

*Tuesday Fellowship*

*Wednesdays, 10.30: Circuit Intercessions Service in Lindisfarne*

*Saturdays, 10.00-12.00: Morning coffee*

*Saturdays, 12.30-2.30: Foodbank open*

\* \* \*

Thu.	Nov30	2.00 - 4.00	Advent Study Group at Church*
Sat.	2	10:00	At the Cathedral: Advent Reflection Day*
Sun.	3	10:30	Morning worship, led by Ian Cornall
		4:30	In Walsingham: Blue Christmas Service, led by Revd. Lesley Moseley*
Thu.	7	2.00 - 4.00	Advent Study Group at Church*
Sat.	9	11.30 - 1.30	Christmas Alive, in Cathedral Square*
Sun.	10	10:30	Morning worship and Toy Service, led by Revd. Lesley Moseley*
Tue.	12	2:00	In Walsingham: Crafty Capers
Thu.	14	2.00 - 4.00	Advent Study Group at Church*
Sun.	17	10:30	Morning worship with Holy Communion Service, led by Revd. Doug Stevens
Thu.	3	2.00 - 4.00	Advent Study Group at Church*
Sun.	24	10:30	Morning worship and Service of Carols and Readings, led by Revd. Lesley Moseley*
Mon.	25	10:30	Christmas Day Family Service, led by Revd. Lesley Moseley*
Sun.	31	10:30	Morning worship, led by Maureen Newcombe
		6:30	At the Cathedral: Hope Service*
January Sat.	6	8:00	At St. Mark's: CTICP Prayer Breakfast
Sun.	7	10:30	Morning worship and Covenant Service, led by Revd. Doug Stevens*
		4:30	In Walsingham: Evening Communion Service and Café Worship, led by Revd. Lesley Moseley

\*Please see more detailed information on p9

## DOGSTHORPE CELEBRATES IN GOLDEN STYLE

Dogsthorpe Methodist Church celebrate 50 years of their building being opened.

*Thursday 30th Nov:* a concert hosted by Peterborough Big Band. 7.30pm.

*Friday 1st Dec:* family fun night – an evening for all the family, 6.00-9.00pm.

*Saturday 2nd Dec:* afternoon tea with line dancing 2.30- 5.00: Night at the Movies 7.30pm.

*Sunday 3rd Dec:* Service of praise and

celebration led by Reverend Gareth Baron followed by a family celebration meal.

All welcome: book meals or more info, [contact@dogsthorpemethodistchurch.co.uk](mailto:contact@dogsthorpemethodistchurch.co.uk) or 01733 767300. No charges, donations for heating fund welcome.

Westgate New Church congratulates Dogsthorpe and wishes them well for the celebrations and the future.