

## MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear friends,

Remember that famous baby from Nazareth? It reminds me of one tourist who, fascinated by the beauty of the town, went to an old man who was feeding the doves next to a lake. His question: "ARE THERE ANY FAMOUS PEOPLE BORN IN THIS TOWN?" The old man ignored him. The tourist thinking that he had not heard asked him loudly this time and the guy retorted, "NOPE! ONLY BABIES!"



Now I was thinking of bringing my photo taken as a baby as a visual aid in my Christmas sermon but that will be playing into the hands of some of my tormentors. For those of you not aware, I have been reliably advised that every move I make is keenly monitored by some of, dare I say, friends who come to church very unevenly. I like to call them the church scattered club. First was my mispronunciations, R instead of L when 'R'about Party won the e\*ctions. Next were my good manners over Ribena at Swanage. Forget the Tesco episode in the local daily! I have lately been accused of wearing unmatched socks. Well with friends like these who need enemies?

I am still persuading my team mates in this awkward squad to come to the church gathering more. However there is one common thing that they and I share when together – stitches. We love life and have great laugh over nothings. We know that it is pleasurable to have pleasure! So if we have this much pleasure out there, why then do I want squad to join me in the church gathering more regularly.

Because I believe that **“True pleasure is a serious business.”** Absolutely. It is all about my ultimate desire: to be a human person, to have a life that really satisfies, to find the meaning of my life. I believe life is good. Forget the Christmas trees for a moment. Christmas is more than a little bit Solstice celebration. If we are to overcome the things that are suffocating human well being today, we need first of all to relocate joy. We need to believe in life again. Redemption only will come to us when we start loving this world again. God cannot be God until God loves. The Creation is divine self-giving in which God ceases to be a local

deity of the Sinai Peninsula and becomes a universal principle that can redeem all humankind. And at Christmas God becomes finite - and it is not a ruse. He really enters fully into our flesh, our predicament, our pleasure, our suffering, our lives. In this act of becoming the God who is a homeless child, God becomes a usable God. He is as close to me as my own breath.

That is why I am an addict to the pleasure Christmas brings. I say “yes” to some forms of pleasure and “no” to others on the basis of whether they will lead me to becoming a true, full, rich human person. I refuse to deny my Self. I want to become genuine, authentic self. As I journey towards Christmas, I am struck by the sacrifice made by God on my behalf. I recognize that, since I have been bought at such a price, my life needs to mean something. I am aware that my accomplishments might disappoint - should disappoint - the One who made the sacrifice. Perhaps that is why Christ came to earth in a cradle. My fear of disappointing Him is overcome by His vulnerability and approachability. If the shame for not having lived up to what I owe Him would keep me from Him, then I will be drawn to Him by a baby's indifference to passing judgment.

Christmas is a time to come home. It is a time to wonder, once again, at what God has done for us. It is a time to start again, to live into the magnificence of God's sacrifice on our behalf. If you cannot approach our God, awesome in goodness, in majesty, and in power, then approach our God as he lies in a manger, fresh born from Mary, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lulled to sleep by the animal's lullaby.

And if you want to or know a friend who wants to explore the pleasure of Christianity please advise them to join us for Alpha course. We begin on 19th January every Thursday to March for ten weeks.

May your Advent be a longing for a Self. May your Christmas be a celebration of your love. There the mending begins.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John', written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

## **A LETTER FROM JOHN SWARBRICK THE CHAIR LONDON SOUTH-WEST DISTRICT**



Dear Friends,

During this year's round of Welcome Services, I used a sermon illustration from Salley Vickers's novel *Mr Golightly's Holiday*, and several people have asked me for more details of the author and her work. She was a writer unknown to me until earlier this year when a friend recommended *Miss Garnet's Angel* to me, and I was hooked. *Mr Golightly's Holiday* followed on swiftly.

Salley Vickers has worked as a teacher in adult education and more recently as a trained analytical psychologist, and she lectures widely on the connections between literature, psychology and religion. Her first novel was *Miss Garnet's Angel*. At one level, this is the story of Julia Garnet, a retired school teacher, who comes to Venice prompted by the death of a friend. She finds the panels by the artist Francesco Guardi in the Church of the Angel Raphael, which tell the story of Tobias and the Angel recorded in the apocryphal Book of Tobit. (You will need a Bible with the Apocrypha to help you follow this, but there is a helpful summary in an appendix.) She then tells the biblical story alongside the story of Miss Garnet, and it is a fascinating way of reflecting upon the moral choices which face human beings and matters of good and evil which recur through all civilizations, ancient and modern.

*Mr Golightly's Holiday* weaves together a profound meditation on the Book of Job with the story of the Mr Golightly of the title. He is a kindly, middle-aged man who takes a holiday in a village on the edge of Dartmoor. Many years ago, Mr Golightly had written a work, which became an international bestseller, but now the reputation of his masterpiece was on the decline, and he was finding himself badly out of touch with the modern world. He was hoping to use his holiday as a sort of sabbatical - an opportunity to bring his great work up-to-date. He considers re-writing it as a sort of soap opera. But in getting to know his new neighbours, he was forced to re-examine his attitude to life and to the terrible catastrophe of the death of his only son.

One of Mr Golightly's neighbours is Ellen Thomas, who has recently lost her husband and is still numb with grief. Then she has what can only be described as a religious experience. Out for a walk one afternoon, her dog begins to sniff and whine round a patch of gorse:

Ellen, about to hurry after him, was arrested by a strong sense that the gorse concealed more than a vole or a rabbit. A violent burning sensation leapt like a ravaging tiger at her heart, and a voice, sweet and terrible, spoke from the golden bush. 'I am love,' it said . . . 'I am Ellen Thomas,' she had offered, diffidently, in return, and waited to be dismissed. But the dismissal came in the form of a further surprise. 'Tell them.' 'What?' Ellen asked. 'Tell them!' said the voice again in its tender, commanding tone.

Now Ellen is not religious, but she becomes a glowing witness (a bit like Moses, perhaps) without knowing too much about it herself. She befriends a prisoner on the run from Dartmoor prison, hides him in her house, and nurses the psychological wounds of a man we later learn is innocent, though he has been in jail for several years for a serious offence he did not commit. She who is wounded by grief becomes the means by which Jos Bainbridge regains his own life: here is a profound exercise in hospitality, not just the material hospitality of sanctuary and food, but the hospitality of the heart. It is in this way that Ellen fulfils the command from the gorse bush: I am love . . . Tell them.

Now there is a darker side to this story which leads to betrayal, tragedy and death; but I don't want to spoil the plot for you entirely! Perhaps it is enough to say that here is a novel which deals with the great Christian themes of love, evil, innocent suffering and redemption; it does so with a light touch, at times comic and at others deeply serious. Perhaps it is the script for a rural soap opera. But I think it is also a thoughtful meditation on how even the most ordinary of lives can be touched by the grace of God—and how even in the most unpromising circumstances a call to love and to bear witness to the love which is at the heart of creation can be discovered and answered.

Best wishes,

*Yours ever,*

*John*

## **THOUGHT OF THE MONTH - DECEMBER 2005**

I am writing this at the beginning of Indoor Allergy Week. No, I'm not kidding you. There is really was such a week on 14<sup>th</sup> November. There are special days and special weeks for all sorts of things now. Stop smoking days; traffic free days; Mother's Day and Father's day (both commercially very profitable); there is even a Grandparents Day at the end of September, but that hasn't caught on yet. Just give it a bit of time and the shop tills will be working overtime for that one. Then there are various Awareness weeks, so many that most people are unaware that they are even happening.

In our church calendars too, the number of "special" Sundays have increased to such an extent that "ordinary" Sundays have almost ceased to exist. When I first began church going, apart from Christmas, Easter and Whitson (it wasn't referred to as Pentecost then) there were only three other "specials" – Overseas Missions Sunday, Temperance Sunday and the Sunday School Anniversary. Temperance Sunday was replaced by Home Missions Sunday but Temperance Sunday was often a tub-thumping occasion with the preacher fervently banging the pulpit and denouncing the Demon Drink to a strictly tee-total congregation. Sunday school Anniversary was one of the highlights of the year often with the girls having new dresses to show off. (In March 1993 Joan Arnold invited me to take the Sunday School Anniversary services at Martin Way and we had a great day of celebration.) In January this year the Methodist Recorder devoted a whole page to Special Sundays. There were special Sundays in every month except August but I expect many passed unnoticed. Do you recall Poverty Action Sunday, Stop in the Name of God Sunday or Women Against Violence Sunday for example?

When do we reach the point when there are so many "special" days or weeks that we become immune to them? As we grow older we realise that EVERY day is a special day, and we thank God for it.

By the way, there is a special Sunday in December which is not included in the Methodist Recorder's list. It falls on the 25<sup>th</sup>, but for the sake of Political Correctness I'd better not say what it is. I might offend someone! Have a very happy one anyway!

*Bill Cox*



Roehampton  
University 

## **The Chaplaincy Theological Society**

In conjunction with

### **The School of Humanities and Cultural Studies**

Invite you to a lecture:

# *‘The Good Heart: The Dalai Lama’s view of the Gospels’*

## **Professor Geoffrey Hunt**

Professor in Philosophy of Care and Buddhist Associate Chaplain  
at the University of Surrey

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2005  
6pm

Southlands College Chapel  
Southlands College  
Roehampton Lane  
London

## I'M JOSEPH, YOUR BROTHER

Over the last two months I have been looking at the story of Joseph and forgiveness, this month I want to make the final and most important point.

### Forgiveness is not forgetfulness

I think that's such a crucial dimension to see in this story. Nowhere does **Joseph** say, "Let's forget the past and move on." Instead, what **Joseph** says to his brothers is this, "You intended evil against me." In other words, he's not forgetting. He's forgiving in spite of what they did. And I think that's critically important to see. He's treating them like adults. He's holding them accountable. There's no mention in the story that the brothers acknowledge their guilt. As far as I can see, they never ask for **Joseph's** forgiveness. They're very frightened of course, and they have every reason to be, and maybe their fear is acknowledgement enough. With their behaviour they seem to say that **Joseph** has every right to have his revenge. But whatever is going on inside the brothers, what's more important to the story is what's going on inside **Joseph**. He **forgives** in spite of what they have done to him.

You know, I think that the strongest temptation in a situation of forgiveness is to discount how painful the injury really was. What we're tempted to say is, "Let's just forget it and move on." And what I've learned over the years about forgiveness, and what I see in this story, is that that's not really forgiveness. That's forgetfulness, maybe, but it's not forgiveness. Forgiveness, when we do it right, acknowledges the injury. Forgiveness says, "Yes, the pain was real. Yes, it hurt. But because I love you, because this relationship means so much to me, I forgive you."

When Pope John II appointed Joseph Bernardin Cardinal of Chicago, his first words to all of the priests and bishops, which set the tone for his entire tenure, were "I am **Joseph** your brother." In 1993 a young man from Cincinnati where he had previously served accused Cardinal Bernardin of sexual abuse. It was not a happy time in the diocese. Bernardin maintained his innocence, but doubt of course remained. Before the young man died (of complications from AIDS), he recanted. He took back the whole story. And Bernardin went to visit him in his hospital room so that he could forgive him. The first words Bernardin

spoke when they met were “I am **Joseph** your brother.”

What would happen to our lives, if we lived them with this spirit, if we entered every conflicted situation with a genuine desire for healing and reconciliation and forgiveness. What would happen if the first words out of our mouths were “I am **Joseph** your brother.” In other words, I reveal myself to you. I make myself vulnerable enough for healing to take place. What would happen to this church, if a profound desire for healing and reconciliation and forgiveness formed the basis for everything we did. I would love to be a part of a community of faith like that.

*John Nyota*

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## **CHRISTMAS GREETINGS**

I am now 93 years old and unfortunately housebound but am sure that my many friends will remember me. I wish to pass on to you all the Very Best of this Seasons Greetings and wish everyone a Happy and Peaceful New Year.

*Vida Brown*

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## **COLOURING TIME**





## CHRISTMAS PAST AND PRESENT



I am told that on Christmas Eve in 1914, the first year of World War I, a strange quiet had settled on the Western Front. It was a welcome respite for some lonely English soldiers who had become all too familiar with the roar of the cannons and the whine of the rifles.

As they reclined in their trenches, each man began to speculate about the activities of loved ones back home. "My parents are just finishing a toast to my health," a lad from Liverpool said slowly. "I can almost hear church bells," said another one. "My whole family will soon be walking out to attend the concert of the boys' choir." The men sat silent for several minutes before a thin soldier from Kent looked up with tears and stammered. "This is eerie! I can almost hear the choir singing." "So can I," shouted another puzzled voice. "I think there is music coming from the other side."

All the men scrambled to the edge of the trench and cocked their ears. What they heard was a few sturdy German voices singing Martin Luther's Christmas song. "From heav'n above to earth I come, to bear good news to every one." When the hymn was finished, the English soldiers sat frozen in silence. Then a large man with a powerful voice broke in the chorus of "God rest ye merry gentlemen." Before he had sung three bars a dozen voices joined with him. By the time he finished, the entire regiment was singing. Once again there was some silence until a German tenor began to sing, "Stille Nacht." The English joined with, "All is calm, all is bright..."

"Someone is approaching!!" a sentry shouted, and attention was focused on a single German soldier who walked slowly, waving a white cloth with one hand and holding several bars of chocolate in the other. Slowly,

men from both sides eased out into the neutral zone and began to greet one another. In the next golden moments, the soldiers shared candy, cigarettes and even the battered but treasured pictures of their loved ones. They even had an amazing soccer match with fire lit from the flares. Then, as quietly as they came together, the men returned to their own trenches. On Christmas day, men from both sides again joined together in even visiting the other's trenches. The Germans, wishing to avenge the previous night's torch-lit soccer loss, organized another game.

In a few days, the cannons once again boomed across "no man's land" and the whine of the rifles was again heard in the trenches. For some, however, it was never the same. The enemy was no longer faceless. Now he was an acquaintance who shared a candy bar or played soccer. When men looked down the barrels of their guns at the opposition, they also saw the smiling faces of those whose pictures were shared on a silent, holy night, when the birth of the Christ Child drew hostile forces together as brothers and, for a few moments, gave weary soldiers a taste of peace and good will.

Not much has changed since World War I. There are still rumours of war. The world is taking sides in a potential deadly conflagration. In World War I, Christians were fighting other Christians; western civilization was turned in on itself in an internecine battle that would change the political and economic landscape of Europe. Today, it looks as if two religions are going to war, two civilizations. Does the Christ child speak to our present situation? Can the Christ Child quell the hostilities between two combatants who have two very different takes on his meaning and place in human history?

The nativity story is not just a sentimental story to make us feel cosy and toasty on a chilly Christmas Eve. The nativity story is a bold proclamation that the coming of Jesus has caused deep tremors in the social landscape, and nothing is outside of the sway of his gracious love. God being wrapped in swaddling clothes means that all things are possible with God, even peace among enemies. Indeed, God can reach down into our troubled world and bring healing and peace. That is our prayer this Christmas.

*John Nyota*

## **GREETINGS FROM MY NEW HOME**



I have been very happy here at Queen's Court Care home in Queen's Road, Wimbledon since moving here in November 2004. I have my own room which looks out onto the railway lines near Wimbledon Station. There is a Patio Garden and we also have our own small coach and we take turns to go out.

There are many activities and outings organised for us. So far I have been to several London Museums, a day at Brighton, Kew Gardens, Wisley Gardens, Nonsuch park, Wimbledon Tennis Museum, Christmas Lights in London last year, Hyde Park, London Zoo, Richmond Park, Hampton Court Gardens and Windsor Castle. On the 60th Anniversary of V.E. Day I was asked to give a little speech.

We have a Hairdresser and Physiotherapist each week and every Monday we are given a printed programme for the weeks activities. We are also given a chance each day to choose our menu for the next day. The food is generally very good and varied. On our Birthdays we get given a present and the staff put on a party for us, with a lovely cake and candles.

I see Gillian Hewer nearly every week and have quite a few visits from Moira Baily. I miss you all and would like to wish you all a Very Happy Christmas and a Health and Peaceful New Year.

*Lucy Hatch*

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## **METHODIST CENTRAL HALL CHARITY CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION**

From 2.30pm to 5.00pm on Saturday 10th December at the Methodist Central Hall in Westminster, all are invited to join in an afternoon full of song and joy. The afternoon will include the Methodist Youth Brass Band, the London Community Gospel Choir, readings from A Christmas Carol by celebrities and songs from local schoolchildren.

Tickets are £17.50 in advance from 020 8405 2971 and all proceeds are in aid of NCH.

# **"FRESH EXPRESSIONS OF BEING CHURCH"**

**Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2006**

**10:30am- 12 noon**

**"Understanding Your Cultural Context"**

*Bring your own lunch, drinks provided*

**2:00pm – 4:00pm**

**"Changing Shapes of Church"**

**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2006**

**3:00pm – 5:00pm**

**"Getting Fresh...where do we begin?"**

6:30pm Concluding Evening Worship. Preacher Rev. Graham Horsley

**Led by Rev. Graham Horsley**

Secretary for Evangelism and Church Planting in the Methodist Church

**Staines Methodist Church. Thames St. Staines. TW18 4SD**

Junction 13 M25

Mainline from Waterloo

Further details from Linda Ashford 01784 462396

Cost £10 per person

## **WOMENS WORLD DAY OF PRAYER**

Next year on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March, our Church will be hosting the evening service put together by the women of SOUTH AFRICA under the title "*SIGN OF THE TIMES*". Please put this date in your diaries and do your best to support it if you possibly can.

If there is anyone who would like to take part – on the door, giving out the service sheets, making tea and coffee, taking the offertory or reading, please let **MARY HEATON** or **JOYCE PLANT** know.

# **CHRISTIAN CARE ASSOCIATION**

## **Helping individuals and families in need in Merton**

The volunteers in this local ecumenical organisation, which grew out of a 1967 Lent group and has been a registered charity for the past 11 years, befriend individuals and families whose lives are hard and stressful by home visits, support with language learning and assistance in filling in official forms. The Sub-Committee for the Homeless helps in finding accommodation and, through the Furniture Project, is involved in the removals and the provision of furniture and household equipment.

In the course of the year through outings for children and teenagers, family holidays and Christian camps we try to bring fun and encouragement into the lives of the families. Our next major event is the New Year 'Snowman' Party on January 28th at Martin Way Methodist Church, at which students from Wimbledon High School help out. About 85 children and parents will enjoy games, tea, singing, an entertainer, presents to take home and, if we can afford it, something extra for the family. Despite specific restricted grants and individual donations, our general funds are very low at the moment. The Party will cost £500; could you help us with a gift so that we can make it a really memorable occasion?

Christian Care is entirely dependant on volunteers. We urgently need a **Treasurer** on the Executive Committee, a **Minute Secretary** for the sub-committee, **Receptionists** to be the first point of contact at the new office in Mitcham, **Drivers** for the furniture van and **Befrienders**. Please consider whether you could give of your time to enrich the lives of families of all faiths or none so that they do not feel rejected and outsiders in our community in Merton.

For offers of help and further information please contact either me, Gwen Wildman at Martin Way Methodist Church or The Chairman, Bert Hyde, 297 Commonside East, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 1HE, phone number 020 8640 0302

*Gwen Wildman*

# PUZZLE CORNER

## Christmas Time Word Search!

O	S	V	S	E	K	A	P	G	C	C	L	H	S	W	S	P	O	J	L	N	Q	V	I	R
J	K	U	N	H	Q	X	M	J	H	X	D	F	A	F	A	Q	J	N	Q	K	A	W	Y	R
V	W	V	S	Q	E	D	I	R	J	O	M	R	Q	S	M	B	W	G	B	P	D	D	R	G
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B	C	H	H	S	O	G	N	A	B	S	S	T	I	H	F	E	H	H	M	B	B	D	Z	Q
P	A	N	T	O	M	I	M	E	E	G	E	L	M	F	T	D	E	Q	N	N	L	T	Q	V
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H	G	A	G	L	I	Q	C	Z	N	N	D	C	R	W	T	I	O	Z	K	T	S	K	I	H

ANGEL CHOIR

BABY JESUS

BETHLEHEM

BOXING DAY

CAROL SINGERS

CHRISTINGLE

CHRISTMAS CARDS

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

CHRISTMAS TREE

COLD WINTER NIGHTS

DECEMBER

FATHER CHRISTMAS

GLOVES

JOSEPH

MANGER

MARY

PANTOMIME

PRESENTS

SHEPHERDS

SNOW

STABLE

STOCKINGS

THREE WISE MEN

TURKEY

WARMFIRE

# CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

**3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> December**

Do you remember the magic of the Christmas Tree Festival in 2003? This year we will be having a similar celebration and ask you to put the dates in your diary and tell your friends and neighbours! All the organisations which meet on our premises have been asked to decorate a tree, but if there are any individuals or families who would like to take part, please let us know - we would love some more!

*Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup>. Dec from 4-00pm till 7-00pm*

*Refreshments*

*Programme of live music in the church*

*Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup>. Dec from 2-30pm till 6-00pm*

*Refreshments (2-30 – 5-00pm)*

*Art and craft activities for children (2-30 – 5-00pm)*

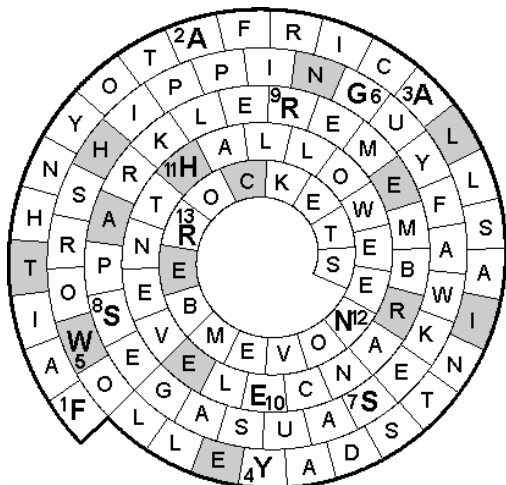
*5-30pm - The Christmas Story under the tree, followed by*

*“Humph, the Camel” by the Sunday Club*

Proceeds will go to NCH Action for children and the Rafiki Trust.

*Janet & Bob Hamblin*

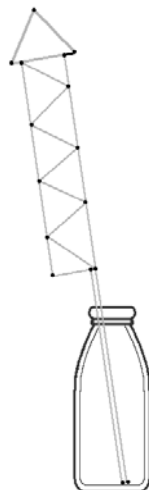
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## **Firework Time! Puzzle Solutions**

The Shaded Squares when rearranged should spell **CATHERINE WHEEL**

And the Join-the-dots was a **Rocket** ready to be fired from the bottle



## THOUGHT OF THE MONTH - JANUARY 2006



So we come once again to January which somehow gives the impression of being the longest month of the year – or is it just me who feels that? Janus the Roman god had two heads, one looking forwards, the other looking backwards. That’s what we all tend to do at this time of year. We look back over the past year, but there is nothing we can do to change what happened. And we look forward, not knowing what lies in store for us. Hopefully the year ahead will be better than last year for all of us. 2005 will go down in history as many terrible natural disasters as well as the year of suicide bombers. 2006? Who knows? We can only do as King George V quoted in one of the first Royal Christmas broadcasts. Put your hand into the hand of God and step out into the unknown in faith and in trust. May your year be full of blessings for you and those you love.

*Bill Cox*

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## COLOURING TIME







The new *Chronicles of Narnia* film, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, to be released 9 December, will set the scene for Christmas worship across the country.

The connection between CS Lewis' *Narnia* stories and the Gospel is well known and they beautifully illustrate the Christian story. Because of this, the organisation Methodist Children has written a service for use by churches throughout Britain focusing on the theme of gift giving and receiving that is central to *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

Churches are encouraged to explore this theme by engaging with the journey of Lucy, Edmund, Peter and Susan as through the wardrobe they enter a world of ice and snow where it is always winter, but never Christmas. Congregations are asked to consider what the world would be like if Christmas never came and are reminded of the importance of the gift we are given at Christmas, past, present and future.

Doug Swanney, Children's Work Development Officer, comments that "Christmas is a time associated with presents and giving and this service aims to highlight Jesus as the great gift of God for our salvation. But it's not just for Christmas – it's ideal for inclusive worship at any time of the year and the format is so flexible that it can easily be adapted to suit different congregations and styles of worship."

If you wish to find out more then visit the Methodist Children's website [www.methodistchildren.org.uk](http://www.methodistchildren.org.uk) and when visiting, people can also take the opportunity to fill in an online survey for those working with children. Continuing the *Narnia* theme, the Children's section of the site has a competition for children to win pairs of tickets to see the film in December.

## **CHURCH DIARY FOR DECEMBER**

Sat	3	4pm-7pm	Christmas Tree Festival
Sun	4	10.30 am	Toy and Gift Service led by Rev John Nyota
		2.30pm-6pm	Christmas Tree Festival
		6.30 pm	Communion Service led by Rev Charlotte Elvey
Mon	5	2.45 pm	Fellowship
Tue	6	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		7.30 pm	Men's Supper Club Social
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	9	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sat	10	2.30-5pm	Central Hall Westminster - Charity Christmas Celebration
Sun	11	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Mr Paul Harvey
		4.00-5.30pm	SIGMA
Mon	12	3.45 pm	Fellowship (Grace Ashwood)
Tue	13	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Weds	15	7.45 pm	Midways (Christmas Meal)
Fri	16	5.00 pm	Carol Singing at Morden Station for NCH
Sun	18	10.30 am	Carol Service led by Rev John Nyota
		5.00 pm	Carol's by Candlelight
Mon	19	2.45 pm	Fellowship
		8.00 pm	Taizé Meeting at St.John Fisher Church
Tue	20	10-12 noon	Coffee and Chat
		5.00 pm	Carol Singing at Morden Station for NCH
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer

Sat	24	5.00 pm	Christingle Service
		11.30 pm	Midnight Communion Service
Sun	25	10.30 am	Christmas Day Service led by Rev John Nyota

## **CHURCH DIARY FOR JANUARY**

Sun	1	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Mr Paul Harvey
Tue	3	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Fri	6	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	8	10.30 am	Covenant and Communion Service led by Rev John Nyota
Tue	10	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Weds	11	7.45 pm	Midways - <i>Musical Evening with Ted Ashwood</i>
Sun	15	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Janet and Bob Hamblin
Tue	17	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Thu	19	7.30pm	ALPHA COURSE
Fri	20	12.30 pm	Luncheon Club
Sun	22	10.30 am	Morning Service led by Rev John Nyota
Tue	24	10-12 pm	Coffee and Chat
		8.00 pm	Time for Prayer
Weds	25	7.45 pm	Midways - <i>MCW Rafiki Trust and our trip to Kenya - Tony Loft and others</i>
Sun	29	10.30 am	Morning Service

*Please refer to the Website ([www.martinway.org.uk](http://www.martinway.org.uk)) or Weekly Notice Sheet for any additional information*



## **CAROL SINGING**

Once again we are going to sing carols at Morden Station and would welcome as many people to come along and join in. All the monies raised will be for NCH. This year we will be meeting at the Station on Friday 16th and Tuesday 20th December and plan to start singing at 5.00pm, just in time to serenade the commuters arriving back after a hard days work.

So if you can spare an hour and feel in fine voice please come and join us, or if you use the station and hear us singing please put a donation in the bucket!

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## **TOY AND GIFT SERVICE**

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> December**

This year our gifts will be going to Merton Christian Care. They have requested no soft toys and gifts left open are preferable because they will have to check each gift in order to give them to the appropriate child.

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## **THE ALPHA COURSE**

The **ALPHA COURSE** will be starting on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> January and we will need many hands to make it work smoothly. **The Tasks Lists are in the Vestry – please help where you can.**

*Your prayers are very important for this new project.*



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**Reminiscences of a Journey to Kenya by Joyce Plant  
will continue in our February Issue**

Items for the **February Newsletter** should be with Andrew Fox, (email: roife@aol.com) by **Sunday 22nd January** at the latest