

MINISTER'S LETTER

And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. *Luke 2:7*



Whenever we read the Christmas story we are confronted by this message of exclusion and the picture that it creates. Mary and Joseph arrive in Bethlehem and, unable to find a suitable place in which to rest, are forced to find alternative accommodation. The reference to a manger – a food trough for animals – has widely led to an understanding that this was a stable.

Whilst there are, and probably always have been, some people all too willing to put up 'no room' signs and teach that we should be fearful or at least wary of the stranger (and recent Government messaging concerning migration gets worryingly close to this, in my view) the Jesus of the Gospels would, I believe, see us take an altogether different approach. Longing to break down those barriers that exist between people and between people and God, Jesus' overriding message is that there is room for all in God's kingdom. We just need to seek it to find it.

As members of the church – the body of Christ – part of our task is to share in Jesus' work and embody his message. If we are to do this then we need to demonstrate our open, inclusive, and welcoming nature by saying to all people, 'There is Room' for you.

It is for this reason that our Church Council has opted to embrace the There Is Room campaign recently launched by the Methodist Church. This will see us further explore this theme throughout our worship this Advent, Christmas and Epiphany and proclaim to all who join us, "There is room for you in the Christmas story." But we can't leave it there.



If our words aren't to sound hollow, they'll need to be reinforced by our actions. To put it another way, we'll need to show that we mean what we say by the warmth and sincerity of our welcome. The good news is that we don't need to wait and see if anyone happens to walk through our doors. The Christmas story is one that we should want others to encounter either for the first time or afresh.

Christmas is the easiest time of year to invite people to church. This means that if you invite people to church, they are more likely to come than at any other time of the year. So, in these early days of Advent, perhaps start thinking about who you might invite and what you might invite them to? Will it be the Nativity led for us by Sunday Club on the morning of Sunday 18th December (10:30 am) or our Community Carols event that we will be holding on the church steps that same evening (6:30pm)? Could it be our Christingle Service on Christmas Eve (5:30pm) or our celebration on Christmas morning (10:30am)? Or could it be all the above?

We have been called to share the good news that, with God, 'There Is Room' for everyone. What are we waiting for?

Wishing you a joyful and peaceful Christmas

Paul

Community Garden

The last three months have been a hive of activity in our Community Garden, and you can see major construction work took place recently. On 27 September we had a team of 10 volunteers join us from Aviva on their "Volunteering Matters" day. The corporate team all took a day off work and joined us in the garden. And wow, they made some phenomenal progress! They built, painted, lined and partially filled the 5 planters in the front



area of the church on Martin Way, painted the fence at the back and planted up our front planters at the entrance. We calculated they donated 60 hours of hard work, it what turned out to be a wet muddy day and we are immensely grateful to them.



Weather permitting we'd like to fill the planters before the winter sets in and sow with soil enriching green manure. Watch out for news on our growing plans for these beds in the spring of 2023.



Meanwhile, our two established beds at the back have yielded some fabulous produce including tomatoes of various varieties (including our Trinity Toms, kindly donated by Viv Newitt), potatoes, courgettes, sweet peppers, carrot, aubergine and green beans.

We've got baby strawberries coming next year, and made cute little lavender bags from our harvester lavender.

On 24 September, Rosie and Marie hosted a fabulous fundraiser Quiz Night in aid of the Community Garden. In addition to a really fun evening had by all, we raised £437.30. This will go towards the next stage in the project which is to paint the mural, build the children's mud kitchen and establish the wildlife mini pond, all to happen in the coming season.

We've been delighted with the Bring and Share lunches over the summer where our church community has come together to share lunch and get involved in activities to support the garden. Sunday Club have created materials for our notice and display boards, and kept up with weeding, we've cooked chutneys from our produce, planted and harvested. There's been some clearance and repair work, weeding and litter picking in and around the church grounds too. So many have



We're planning some more fun ways to fundraise for next year. On Thursday 15 December we shall be hosting the very talented Eclipse Choir for a night of music at Martin Way. With their mixed repertoire of contemporary, classical and Christmas music, it's set to be an enjoyable and fun evening. Refreshments and a Mocktail Bar will be available to lead you nicely into the Christmas celebrations.

As the gardening season draws to a close, we'd like to thank everyone for joining on this journey with us, whether you've weeded, watered, planted, harvested, created or just turned up to support and share lunch with us. You've all been amazing and we're excited to look ahead to our third growing season in 2023.

Abby & Shelley



Gardening Know-How

Home Made Compost

We thought it would be interesting to share some Gardening Tips and Know How and some of the ideas we are putting into practice at Martin Way Community Garden. In this edition, we are focussing on the subject of the humble home made compost.

Homemade compost is really great for the garden, and an environmentally friendly and cost effective way to improve and nourish the soil. Compost heaps can also encourage other insects and wildlife into the garden, and can provide a nest for bees, slow worms and other bugs. Careless composting however can attract unwanted creatures (some would call vermin) and we'll cover that later.

First, let's look at the basics

To make good compost, we need an equal mix of materials that are rich in nitrogen and carbon. Nitrogen comes from green material like grass and other vegetation. Carbon comes from brown material, such as woody stems and prunings, paper and card. We should cut up woody stems into small sections before adding them so that they break down more easily. If we add paper, card and egg boxes these are ideally left intact or scrunched up to allow air to circulate. It aids the composting process and adds structure to the compost. Loo rolls are perfect thrown in as they are!

Too much of either brown or green and we create either dry, inactive compost or a slimy, smelly, sludgy mix, and neither is good for the garden, nor pleasant to work with. Half brown, half green is best and will create a crumbly brown compost that has a sweet smell to it, after about 6 months.

Heat is generated in the composter as the contents break down, so a warm sunny spot in the garden really helps this process. Additionally we like to encourage other insects into the composter from the bottom up, so placing the bin straight on top of soil that's been dug over will encourage worms and bugs to come up and do their own magic in the bin. It's best to keep the cover on it to keep the rain out.

Periodically emptying out the composter, and giving it a good mix can speed up the decomposition process too, especially if we move the outside contents into the middle of the bin. This aerates the mix and encourages an even breakdown as the middle of the pile is always going to generate more heat and breakdown faster.

A word of caution when turning over the contents of a composter in this way. In the winter, wood mice or slow worms enjoy the heat and may nest and /or hibernate in the composter, which fine of course, encourages bio - diversity and does no harm to the compost. If we accidentally disturb a nest we can just put the creatures back carefully. Turning the compost in Spring is best though to avoid this as most creatures would be out of hibernation by then but not yet nesting.

How do I know it's ready?

After about 6 months it should be brown and crumbly and well rotted down. If the mix is not right, it's too cold or dry or it's not been turned, it can take longer to get good compost. Avoid using it on the beds until it is ready, as vegetation composting directly into beds actually takes nutrients from the soil.

A note about UNWANTED creatures and composting COOKED food

Rats and foxes are unlikely to be interested in a composter if it has the correct mix of green and brown waste and the correct ingredients from the "Good" contents listed below is used.

But what about COOKED food and scraps? Whilst compost can be made using cooked food (the local authority does this for our household waste), it does require special processing before it goes into the compost bin, so should therefore NOT be placed directly into garden composting. This is a sure way of attracting unwanted creatures to the garden, (like foxes and rats); they'll turn the bin over and create a smelly mess. Additionally it attracts flies and maggots and it does not make good compost without the proper processing.

Another big NO-NO is cat and dog poo; never put that in. It stinks, attracts flies and maggots and can carry parasitic worms and other pathogens.

So, what is "Good" ingredients for the perfect compost? Remember; it's a 50 / 50 mix of Green and Brown waste from the lists below.

Good nitrogen-rich green waste:

- Grass
- Fruit and veg peelings
- Spent stalks and leaves from healthy plants, that are dying back or have been harvested.
- Teabags
- Nettles or Comfrey

Carbon-rich brown waste:

- Twigs and prunings
- Hedge trimmings
- Straw, wood sawdust
- Paper towels (that have not been used with cleaning chemicals) and newspaper (scrunched up)
- Cardboard
- Paper bags
- Eggshells, natural fibres (wool or cotton), small amounts of wood ash

Don't add:

- Cooked food - see above
- Diseased plants or leaves
- Weeds
- Citrus (this rots slowly and discourages worms because of the high acidity)
- Raw meat or dairy products
- Glossy, shiny or colour-printed paper
- Ash from coal fires
- Animal poo - see above
- Autumn leaves
- Metal, pins, staples
- Plastics
- Floral Oasis or similar materials used in flower arranging

We'll be applying all these conditions to our composter and appreciate everyone's help at Church when putting stuff in and hopefully by next year we will have some rich, high quality home compost to use on our beds.

We hope you have found this interesting, and that it encourages you to start to home compost too!

Happy Gardening...

Community Garden Meeting date

Planning meeting on **Monday 6th February** at The Morden Brooke at 7.30pm.



ALL WELCOME to talk about our plans for the year ahead

Thinking about:

- What vegetables we want to grow in our new planters
- Plans for the mural, mud kitchen, bug hotel, wildlife pond and sensory part of the garden
- How we will start to support and interact with our local community
- Plus other plans for the community garden over 2023

Hope you would join us

Best wishes

Abby & Shelley

Tony's Open House

Thank you all whom supported my Open House in September I was able to send £290.70 to St Raphael's Hospice. I would like to take this opportunity also to wish everyone a peaceful Christmas, and a happy New Year. As I will be celebrating Christmas and the New Year with my sister in Australia.

This is the first time in my life that I will be sitting down to Christmas dinner in the middle of summer; so no chance of snow for me (Fingers crossed).

Again have a peaceful and safe time over the festive period.

Every Blessing

Tony Loft

Fund Raising in support of St Raphael's Hospice

Snowdon at Night

In August Abby Herring, My daughter Rachael and myself joined a team to do a night climb of Snowdon in aid of St Raphael's Hospice.

Trekking Mount Snowdon (1,805m) during the day can be a challenge but at night, using only torches to light the way is a different level.

We started the climb at midnight and reached the summit in three hours. It was very cold up there and obviously too early to see the sun rise, which would have been amazing if it wasn't dark and cloudy.

The descent was much more challenging for me. It was very. Painful on the knees. It took about three and half hours to get down, but it was a great feeling to have achieved the challenge and between us raise £1,442.47 for St Raphael's Hospice.

While we were in Snowdonia, Rachael, Richard, Abby and Sara (Abby's cousin) booked to go on the world's fastest zip wire. (Velocity 2) It can travel up to speeds of 100mph. It goes over Penryhyn Quarry and you can experience picturesque views of Snowdonia.

I did not do this as I had done it earlier in the year with colleagues from work for Alzheimer's Research, so I looked after Bertie (Abby & Richards dog)

Thank you to everyone who supported us with our climb of Snowdon for St Raphael's, we were so pleased with how much we raised for this great cause.

Rachael is waiting to hear if she has secured a place for the London Marathon in April next year with the Hospice. This will be her first full marathon.

Thank you from

Anne Conquest



JOIN US FOR AN EVENING WITH



CHOIR DIRECTOR JAMES HAWKINS

THURSDAY 15TH DECEMBER
7PM FOR A 7.30PM START
AT MARTIN WAY METHODIST CHURCH
SW20 9JZ

Everyone is invited to attend
Tickets £10 adults and £6 for Under 16's
Visit Martin Way Website for more details
Or please speak to Abby or Shelley



In support of Martin Way Community Garden

World Prayer Day

Each year the World Day of Prayer service is written by the Christian women of a different country. Next year it is the turn of Taiwan, a country that has for many years been caught in a superpower struggle. It has been isolated internationally for decades and, as of April 2022, only 13 of the 193 UN member states and Vatican City/Holy See have recognised Taiwan as a sovereign country.

The next World Day of Prayer service to be held on the 3rd March 2023 on the theme "I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus" (Ephesians 1:15) As Christians in many parts of the world continue to face adverse circumstances, suffering from hardship and persecution, they still need to be surrounded in prayer and encouraged to hold steadfast to their faith just like Paul encouraged the Ephesians. As China is beginning to harass Taiwan almost on a daily basis; according to Reuters, the risk of conflict is now at its highest level for decades, the people of Taiwan are very much in need of our prayers at this time.



In the artwork on the cover of the service program, the artist Hui-Wen Hsaio uses several motifs that highlight Taiwan's best known features to express how the Christian faith brings peace and a new vision to Taiwan. The women in the painting are sitting by a stream, praying silently and looking up into the dark. Despite the uncertainty of the path ahead, they know that the salvation of Christ has come.

Two endangered species are featured: the Mikado pheasant and the black-faced spoonbill, which are both of unique significance to the Taiwanese people. The green grass represents the Taiwanese as simple, confident, strong and under God's care. The Phalaenopsis (butterfly) orchids stand out against the dark background. They are the pride of Taiwan, which has a worldwide reputation as the 'Kingdom of Orchids'.

It has been an enormous privilege for me to represent the Welsh Speaking Churches on the World Day of Prayer National Committee for the past 4 years. To be part of a huge wave of prayer which circles the earth beginning in Western Samoa as far as the American Samoa is truly amazing. It is therefore with great sadness for me to be leaving the National Committee at the end of the year. The WDP movement has always been an integral part of my life and I shall continue to be involved in the local Wimbledon branch and also form a branch for the Welsh churches in London and that is exciting. Meanwhile we at WDP pray for other representatives to join the National Committee; for the Welsh speaking churches and also the English speaking churches in Wales.

Let us thank the Christian women of Taiwan for the 2023 service and pray that our response will be affirmative and constructive as we commit ourselves to positive prayerful action.

Gwen Wildman

World Day of Prayer Service will be held at Martin Way Methodist Church. It will be on **Friday 3rd March** at 10.30

An Amazing Summer for Christian CARE

This gloriously sunny school summer holiday was packed with Children’s and Family Activities. We praise God that all the complicated arrangements worked out, everyone travelled safely; special times and so many new experiences were enjoyed by all.

This year we sent 2 large families for a week’s stay at Butlins in Bognor Regis. In one case this was a celebration that, after 8 years of struggles and deprivation, both parents and children can look forward with hope to the future. In the other case we wanted to honour a lone mother who, starting from nothing, has battled so hard for 4 years to bring up her 4 children and give them a better life; we are so pleased that she has come back feeling much less stressed and quite overwhelmed by the experience. Our secretary Pat arranges these holidays with careful concern for each family’s requirements.



Nine 8-11 year olds went to Carrotty Wood Falcon Camp in Kent. Only one of youngsters had been before and there were a lot of really nervous parents and children. But we knew that Joy and Kevin, in their

last year as camp leaders, would give them a great time. One father emailed us immediately his sons got back: “The boys returned this morning full of smiles and with happiness showing on their faces. Words cannot actually express how happy

and grateful they are. I think they have still got a lot to tell from the experience they had at the camp.” Their older sister had her first experience of Oakwood Falcon Camp at Bracknell for the 12- 17year olds.



Her mother phoned as she returned very tearful – she could have stayed a whole month it was so wonderful!

Another of the 8 older campers came back to impress upon his mother how important it was that they prayed and read the Bible every day. Lydia and her team are truly amazing in engaging at a deep level with the teenagers. It was the first time that Mary had organised the whole process of getting 17 youngsters to camps and she did so well.

A new venture this summer was a trip to Hounslow Urban Farm for 36 parents and younger children – and 2 grandmothers, one disabled and the other speaking only Urdu! Clare, as outings Organiser, researched and set it all up with calm efficiency.



We travelled in a luxurious, air-conditioned coach with a Disney film playing and a driver who, because of his own childhood experience, shares our desire to bring happiness to these families. We were thrilled that it was so successful. It started

with the animal experience encountering and holding, stick insects, millipedes, giant cockroaches, salamanders, tortoises and snakes. Next Clare had prepared a picnic for everyone in a shady marquee. Then it was time to wander around the farmyard, feed the goats and sheep and meet the rather grumpy alpaca.

All this happened through the hard work of our Children’s Activities Team which also includes Julia who prepares birthday cards and gifts for the children. Sadly the team is leaderless after the retirement Sue. Please pray with us for someone with an understanding and experience of children’s needs to come forward soon. Another key member of that team, Transport Organiser, Lizzie, who set up the 8 drivers and chaperones for the Butlins holidays and the 10 drivers and chaperones for the Oakwood Camp, is also stepping down in the New Year; we are now starting to look for someone to take over the transport organisation that she has streamlined over the past 5 years.

Gillian Thick
CARE Coordinator

For more information visit:
<https://www.christiancaremerton.org.uk>



CHRISTIAN CARE ASSOCIATION

GIFTS FOR CHILDREN in 2023

We would like a range of new items that will benefit **boys and girls** from **birth to 11 years**. These may be given as birthday presents or to families who have few toys and games to stimulate learning. Also do include some outdoor clothing to keep them warm in the cold days ahead. Items do not need to be wrapped.

For all ages

woolly hats, scarves, gloves, tights, socks

For babies and toddlers

Baby toiletries – bath wash, lotion, shampoo, talc, bibs etc

Rattles, pull-along toys, puzzles, anything from Night Garden,

Thomas the Tank Engine / Bob the Builder ranges, phones, baby dolls, building blocks etc

Cars, trucks, trains, Lego, games – appropriate for different ages

We cannot often use jigsaws and games with small pieces that are easily lost or put in the mouth. War games and Monopoly are generally not suitable.

Dolls, tea sets, toy food and kitchen gadgets, buggy, anything from Frozen, Paw Patrol, Action Man, Spider Man and Superman ranges

We do not require soft toys

Stationery

Crayons, gel pens, pencils, pencils cases, drawing books, craft activities for boys and girls

Books

Fun activity and story books for all ages, some appropriate for children where English is not the first language for the family

Not dictionaries, encyclopedias

Accessories

Bags, umbrellas, jewellery, hair accessories

We are always particularly short of toys for the older age ranges (6 -11yrs) especially BOYS.

Nativity Gift Service 18th December at 10.30am

Christmas Tree Festival & Craft Fair

Opening times

Friday 9th Dec
12:30-18:30

Saturday 10th Dec
12:00-18:00

Craft Fair 13:30-16:30

Sunday 11th
Dec 12:00-16:00

In support of



Christ Church with St Philip





Holy Trinity
THE BROADWAY SW19

MERTON
PRIORY
CHRISTCHURCH
HOLY TRINITY
+ ST JOHN'S +
TEAM
MINISTRY

Holy Trinity Warm Space

Every Friday, starting 18 November 2022, Holy Trinity Church is offering a cosy, warm space from 10am - 4pm to fight the winter cold.

Apart from a pleasant, welcoming environment, we offer:

- Tea and coffee ◇
- A light lunch ◇
- Magazines ◇
- Jigsaws ◇
- Great company ◇
- Wi-Fi ◇

There is no charge, just drop-in.

**Drop in Fridays from 10am - 4pm at
Holy Trinity Church (next to the Polka Theatre),
234 The Broadway, South Wimbledon.**

For more information, please contact Richard Blades on 07887 481462 or John Eades on 07802 176258.

CHURCH DIARY

DECEMBER 2022			
Sun	4	10.30am	Morning Worship – led by Valerie Ashcroft
		6.00pm	Holy Communion – led by Revd Paul Timmis
Tue	6	10.30am	Coffee & Chat
Wed	7	11.30am	Open Table
		7.30pm	Circuit @ Ruxley
Fri		12.30pm	Lunch Club
Sun	11	10.30am	Morning Worship – Led by Brenda Cannon
Tue	13	10.30am	Coffee & Chat
Wed	14	11.30am	Open Table
Thur	16	7.30pm	Eclipse Choir
Sun	18	10.30am	Nativity – Gift Service (HC) – Led by Revd Paul Timmis
		6.30pm	Community Carol Singing
Tue	20	10.30am	Coffee & Chat
Wed	21	11.30am	Open Table
Sat	24	5.30pm	Christingle Service – Led by Revd Paul Timmis
Sun	25	10.30am	Christmas Day – Led by Revd Paul Timmis
JANUARY 2023			
Sun	1	10.30am	Circuit Service – Ruxley
Tue	3	10.30am	Coffee & Chat
Fri	6	12.30pm	Lunch Club
Sun	8	10.30am	Morning Worship – Led by Brenda Cannon
Tue	10	10.30am	Coffee & Chat
Sun	15	10.30am	Covenant & HC – Led by Revd Paul Timmis

JANUARY 2023 cont.			
Fri	20	12.30pm	Lunch Club
Sun	22	10.30am	Morning Worship – Led by Viv Newitt
		6.00pm	Holy Communion – Led by Revd Paul Timmis
Tue	24	10.30am	Coffee & Chat
Thur	26	8.00pm	Church Council – via Zoom
Sun	29	10.30am	Café Worship – Led by Revd Paul Timmis
Tue	31	10.30am	Coffee & Chat
FEBRUARY 2023			
Fri	3	12.30pm	Lunch Club
Sun	5	10.30am	Morning Worship – Led by Tony Loft
Tue	7	10.30am	Coffee & Chat
Sun	12	10.30am	Morning Worship – Led by Richard Graham
Tue	14	10.30am	Coffee & Chat
Fri	17	12.30pm	Lunch Club
Sun	19	10.30am	Holy Communion – Led by Revd Chris Morley
Tue	21	10.30am	Coffee & Chat
Sun	26	10.30am	Café Worship – Led by Revd Paul Timmis
		6.00pm	Holy Communion – Led by Revd Emma Cusack
Tue	28	10.30am	Coffee & Chat

Please email items for next month's Newsletter to
newsletter@martinway.org.uk by **Sunday 12 February 2023.**