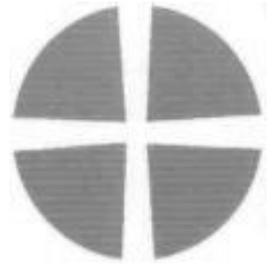


NEWS ON THE Park



**BI-Monthly
Magazine**

Issue No. 79

**December
2019
January
2020**



**Burn Park
Methodist Church**

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Burn Park Road, Sunderland, SR2 7JH
<http://burnparkmethodistchurch.weebly.com/>

Words of Wisdom

KathyHoward
unshakeable faith for life

4 Christmas Gifts from Jesus

One of our family's Christmas traditions has been to read the biblical Christmas story together on Christmas Eve. We read those chapters from Matthew and Luke about the angels, the shepherds, the star, the magi, and the infant Christ born in a stable in Bethlehem. These beloved passages are so dear and familiar I can recite huge chunks of them from memory. But did you know there is also a Christmas account in John's Gospel?

John gives us a different perspective. He didn't write about the earthly circumstances surrounding the birth of Jesus. Instead, John's account is more of a heavenly perspective. He wrote about the eternal, divine nature of Jesus the Word and His purpose in coming to earth.



If you have time, read John 1:1-14 now. Or read it tonight with your family. As you read, look for the 4 things Jesus brought to the earth with His first coming. They are His Christmas gifts to us.

Life – In his Gospel, John uses the Greek word *zoe*, translated as “life,” 36 times! True life – eternal, spiritual life – is in Jesus. He embodies life (John 1:4). He alone can give life (John 5:24-26; John 11:25-26). And He came to earth to bring it to us (John 3:16).

Light – This world and everyone in it is dead and dying without Jesus. We stumble around in the darkness and can't find our way to God. Jesus came to light the way to God (John 1:4-5). Many claim to know the way, but Jesus is the “true light” that gives light to everyone (John 1:9).

Grace – Jesus came from the Father to bring us grace (John 1:14). Jesus's death on the cross is the ultimate act of grace. Our sin separates us from God and we cannot save ourselves. But Jesus' death paid the penalty our sins deserve. When we put our faith and trust in Jesus and His death and resurrection we receive God's gracious gift of salvation (John 3:16-17).

Truth – Jesus came to bring us God's truth (John 1:14). During His time on earth He testified to the truth of God (John 18:37). Many reject it. Many cling to the world's “truth.” But only Jesus gives us God's truth (John 3:31-36).

You may receive gifts this Christmas that cost a lot of money. But none compare to the 4 gifts Jesus longs to give. Open them up. Embrace them. Share them.

May God abundantly bless you with His life, light, grace, and truth this Christmas.

December January

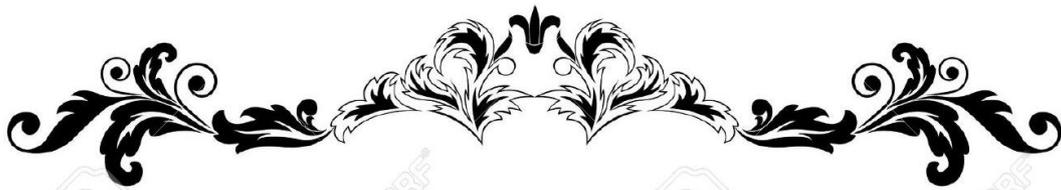


Leaves have fallen,
trees are bare.
Nights are drawing
dark and drear.
Lord of light,
shine from above,
Keep us safe
with your peace and love.

Poetry Corner

*Ever since the Angels sang,
Of 'Peace on Earth' to men:
All have strained to hear that sound,
And find that Peace again!
Still we struggle with a world,
So full of greed and strife:
Give us Lord, this Christmas time,
Your everlasting life.
Banish fear, and fill each heart
With joy: O Saviour come.
Bring Love to Earth, that Hope may greet
Each one of us in our home!*

Grace S. Edgoose



"God never gives someone a gift they are not capable of receiving. If He gives us the gift of Christmas, it is because we all have the ability to understand and receive it."

Pope Francis



Fun & Games

A Page for all the family

“Light of the World”

Mindfulness Colouring page.



Pause for Thought ..

Hymns and Prophets

Have you ever wondered about the symbolism behind the hymns we sing? I am sure that you have; even maybe just subconsciously. Often, we pick out a line of Biblical text from a hymn or when reading our Bible find ourselves singing the words to their familiar tune. (How can we read Isaiah 9 without thinking of the familiar tunes in Handel's Messiah?). At present in my Local Preacher's study I am looking at a section on the prophets and prophecy. At this time of year, coming up to Advent and Christmas we think a lot about the prophets and their foretelling of the good news of the birth of Jesus, offering us an opportunity to prepare once again for this amazing coming.

While looking for hymns for a service that I will be leading in Advent, I came across the hymn 'Wild and lone the prophet's voice' (StF 189). Do you know it? I'm not sure that I do! It was written by Carl P. Daw, Jr. (b1944), for a History of America competition for Advent hymns in 1985.

As with the voice of many prophets, the hymn starts off with a call for us to repent of our sins and turn to God's will, made by the voice of John the Baptist in the desert. It is a reminder that we need to prepare ourselves for the coming of Christ. This involves hard work, tough choices and acceptance of divine justice. In all four Gospels, John fulfils the message of the prophet Isaiah (40:3), 'A voice of one calling; 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God' (NIV), written around 559-530BC when groups of exiles begin returning to Judah from Babylon, however the words of John in verses 1 and 2 are primarily the words of Matthew (3:1-12).

The way the hymn is written challenges us to question our lives, 'Turn from sin', 'be baptised', 'cleanse your heart', 'yield your life to God's control'. This reflects for many of us our journey through our Christian pathway and the message of so many of the prophets. At this time of year, is it not a perfect opportunity to use the words of the prophets to reflect on our own pathway?

In the second verse, Daw uses Galatians 5:22-23 to remind us that true repentance should bear fruits of the Spirit; here we have justice and two of the fruits listed. Can you recall all the others? We are also reminded to set our hearts on things above rather than earthly desires (Colossians 3:1-12). We then return to the message of Matthew 3:12, where the threshing-floor will be cleared, with the wheat gathered up and the chaff burnt, reminding us of Christ's later ministry in the parable of the wheat and the tares in Matthew 13. We remember that through time, prophets have often stood on the margins of society, challenging their listeners to confront what they believed to be wrong in God's eyes in society. This was also apparent in early Methodism, as it still is today where we see so much work against injustice.

Verse three, sums up the preaching of John the Baptist that salvation is near, words that bring us comfort and hope if we allow ourselves to accept Jesus and continue to open our hearts fully to Him. The end of the verse based on John 1:29,36 and Revelation 5:6-14 reminds us that we need to journey on in faith until we at last will be able to say, 'Behold the Lamb of God'. Surely this should inspire us to be modern day prophets through our words and deeds in the world today.

Why don't you spend some time this Advent, maybe reading through this and other Advent hymns, to see what they are saying to each one of us, as we prepare ourselves again for the Lord's first coming at Bethlehem and anticipate his second coming in power, glory and love. The second Sunday in Advent is traditionally associated with the prophets and the third with John the Baptist. Maybe these Sundays will give you an opportunity to revisit the message that they bring and share any thoughts you may have with others.

June Beeby



10 SECOND SERMONS:

"It's not how much we give but how much love we put into giving."

- Mother Teresa

Time for Reflection

It's Christmas time at our house and we're putting up a tree.
I wish I could find some simple way to remember God's gift to me.

Some little sign or symbol to show friends stopping by,
The little babe was born one day but he really came to die.

Some symbol of his nail-pierced hands, the blood he shed for me.
What if I hung and nail on my Christmas tree?

I know it was his love for us that held him to a tree,
But when I see this simple nail I'll know he died for me.

It may seem strange at Christmas time to think of nails and wood,
But both were used in Jesus' life to bring us something good.

From manger bed, to crown of thorns, to death on Calvary,
God used the wood and nails of men to set all people free.

From "A Bundle of Laughs", J. John and Mark Stibbe, Monarch Books



Celebrations

Wedding Anniversaries

Birthdays



December

1st Elma Morgan

24th Margaret Metcalfe

December & January

None known



January

27th Rob Whitfield

 Can we celebrate your special day too? All you have to do is fill in the form and place them in the gold box at the back of the Church; spare forms to fill in are on the side of the box.

Prayer Time

An Advent Suggestion:

This December, why not start a new Advent tradition? Read one chapter of Luke's Gospel each day; there are 24 chapters - so on Christmas Eve you will have read an entire account of Jesus' life, and you will wake up on Christmas morning remembering exactly **who** and **why** we are celebrating!



Praying through Advent

Four short prayers for use in the four weeks of Advent:

Advent 1

O God, we are your people.
You call us to live in peace with our neighbours.
Help us to build a place of peace wherever we are.

Amen.



Advent 2

O God, your people looked with hope to a land of promise.
Help us to long for your promises
not the unimportant things of this world.

Amen.

Advent 3

O God, you give us so much. Thank you.
We celebrate your goodness and generosity.
Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Amen.

Advent 4

O God, you sent your messengers
To tell people that the Christ was coming.
We look for reminders of your messengers.
Help us to listen to your message to us today.

Amen.



Letter to Mary

11th November 2019

Hi Everyone,

Well, this year is nearly over and life is still, as ever, very busy. We performed the Irving Berlin Concert on 20th and 21st September which went well. I won 2 handbags, on the raffle, which match my holiday clothes and they came in really handy. We still haven't got the knack of packing just enough clothes to have lighter cases, but we both had a really restful holiday. Rob's exercise was 3 walks daily at least. I swam, a little bit of walking and dancing on the night. 10.30 a.m. every day was the stretching exercises and Yoga. Oh, I forgot the most important event in September for us; our oldest daughter Clare was married to Manuele Fella, at 1 p.m. on Saturday 28th September.



The church had worked hard cleaning and clearing the two side aisles and having the floor varnished. Rob helped Nick to varnish the two sides where the seats had been and paint the heating pipes and radiators a shiny black. Ann Horn had made new bags for the Sunday School and she helped me to arrange the flowers. Manuele's mother, Jennifer brought the decorations for the seats and the ends of the pews. We took every bit off the floor before we left. It looked beautiful and looking down the aisle at what Clare and her dad would first see looked fantastic. It looked like a cor de ballet; amazing!

Rosemary did a wonderful job of making everyone feel at ease, going through everything slowly. So much so that when it came to the two youngest bridesmaids to say their pieces, they hurried up to the pulpit and put a chair there for Amelia so she could say her part, "What is love? Love is a feeling". Then Annabel said "If you live to be 100 I would want to live a day less so I didn't live without you". The two mothers had to sign the wedding certificate and then when all that was done, we all did "Jazz Hands" and everyone laughed. It wasn't long before we were outside and everyone was clicking with



their cameras. There were buses and taxis waiting to take us back to the Wheatsheaf where there were even more surprises. There was a table beside the coffee bar counter full of jars of sugared almond and flavoured chocolate sweets. Apparently it

is an Italian tradition at weddings. We had a buffet meal, you just helped yourself to salad, cold meats and then cupcakes. Then we joined Manuele's dad in the marquee. The tables and chairs were dressed and had flowery lanterns. Everyone was listening to the music (Manuele's dad on the accordion and a friend on the guitar) and singing along or dancing. Clare and Manuele had their first dance here. As evening approached we had another buffet of burgers, hot dogs and buns, and curry. Then the bands started to play and the guests danced on the grass. Clare ended up in bare feet dancing with Evie Grace (the granddaughter of my cousin Fiona and Derek). It was nearly midnight before we went back inside.



On 29th October we started rehearsing songs for the pantomime we are putting on next year, 'Dick Whittington'. So far so good.

I have started going to the Sunderland Royal on a Thursday for manipulation on my neck. I have Arthritis in my neck which sends pain to my shoulder blade, back, down my left arm and sends pins and needles in my fingers. It stops me holding things with them so I can't do much with them now. I also have to go to the falls clinic at Washington. I am taken by ambulance and they are helping me control my balance. The nurse could see an improvement last Wednesday. This week I have a nasty cold which is affecting my ears and my balance.

We are still visiting my Mam at Highcliffe. She's had a good spell lately and has been eating more of her meals. The dementia is slowly advancing. When we arrive she could be asleep in a chair in the lounge and when she wakes, if she's having a good day she looks around and smiles at us. We talk to her and show her our new photos of the family which makes her feel tired. Other visits when she is not feeling good, she might open her eyes but goes straight back to sleep.

It was my turn to arrange the flowers in church last week for the Remembrance service. Rob took me to a flower outlet in Washington where I bought some poppies. When I went into the church to decide where to put them, I discovered that Nick had put some of the poppies we made last year onto a big drum. I was delighted and with my poppies I had brought put into two brass engraved vases they went together beautifully. The Rev. Martyn commented on how nice they all looked.

Well, I can't remember much more tonight so I going to have an early night,

Bye for now,
Lots of Love,

June

xxxxxx

Now for some funnies

Freddie and John were fortunate enough to have a season ticket to watch Chelsea. They could not help noticing that there was always a spare seat next (B14) to them and they had a friend who would love to buy a season ticket, especially if all three could have seats together.

One half-time Freddie went to the ticket office and asked if they could buy the season ticket for B14. The official said that unfortunately the ticket had been sold. Nevertheless, week after week the seat was still empty.

Then on Boxing day, much to Freddie and Eddie's amazement the seat was taken for the first time that season. John could not resist asking the newcomer, 'Where have you been all season'. Don't ask he said, the wife bought the season ticket back last summer, and kept it for a surprise Christmas present.



What do sheep say at Christmas?

A Merry Christmas to Ewe!



Who do Santa's helpers call when they're ill?

The National Elf Service!



Why did Scrooge keep a pet lamb?

Because it would say, "Baaaaahh humbug!"



What do you call buying a piano for the holidays?

Christmas Chopin!



What's a child's favourite king at Christmas? A stoc-king!



How did Mary and Joseph know Jesus' weight when he was born?

They had a weigh in a manger!



The Crist family worked at a zoo.

Each year they predicted the general luck and overall mood of the year by watching the gnu. If the gnu's ears were forward, that meant a successful, joyous year was almost certain to happen. But if his ears were laid back flat against his head, it meant that an unlucky or very unhappy year was sure to come.

One year it was young Mary turn to "survey" the animal and come up with the prediction. It was her first time solo, and in her excitement, she forgot to take the key to the cage. She was late in coming to check on the gnu. Well, she saw the wrong ear position and predicted a bad year, when in fact it was quite good. To explain the error, the local newspaper ran the following headline a year later:

Mary Crist misses an happy gnu's year.



How did Scrooge win the football game?

The ghost of Christmas passed!



Why is it getting harder to buy Advent calendars?

Their days are numbered!



What does Santa suffer from if he gets stuck in a chimney?
Claus-trophobia!



What happened to the man who stole an Advent Calendar?

He got 25 days!



Why was the turkey in the pop group?

Because he was the only one with drumsticks!



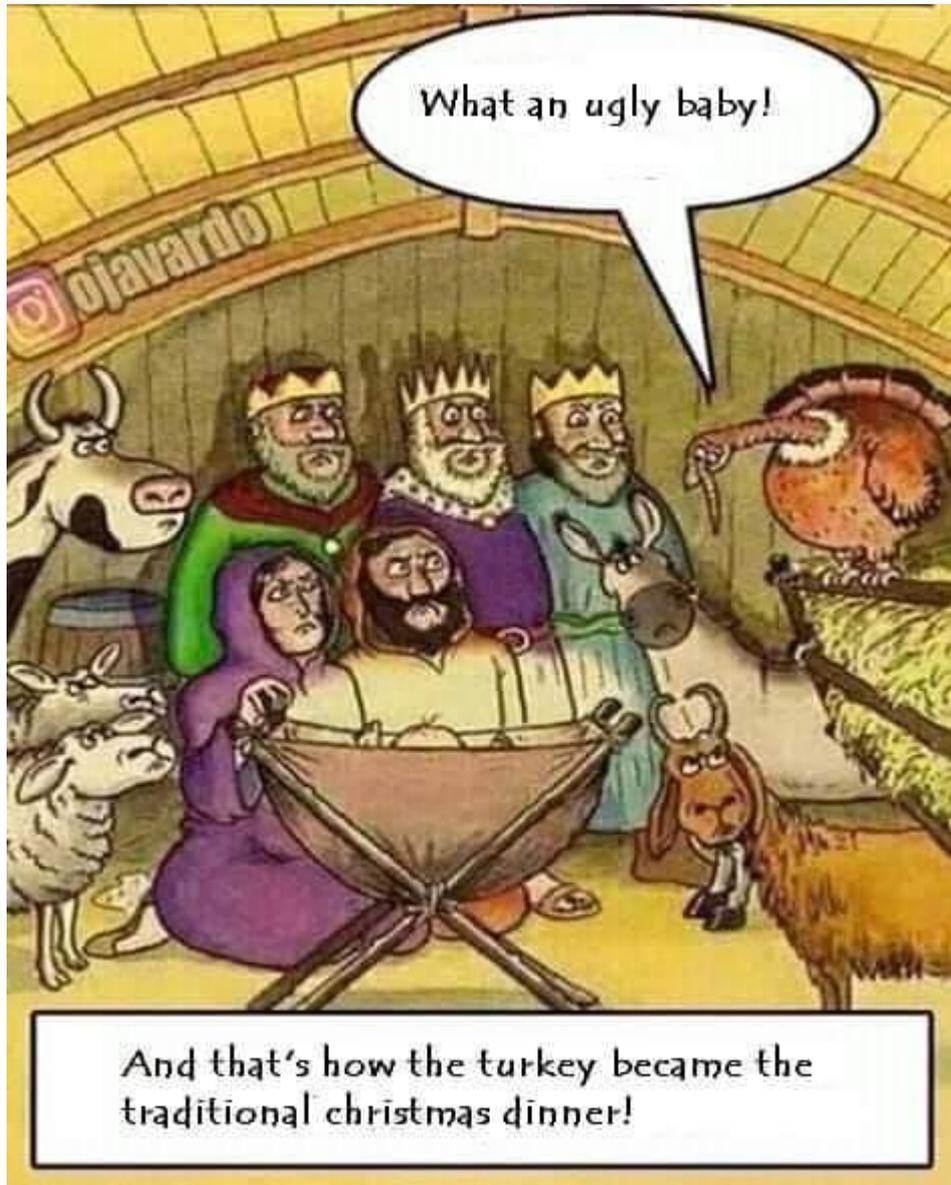
What do you get if you cross Santa with a duck?

A Christmas Quacker!



As a little girl climbed onto Santa's lap, Santa asked her the usual question, "And what would you like for Christmas?"

The child stared at him, open mouthed and horrified for a minute, then gasped: "Didn't you get my email?"



It was a cold and misty Christmas morning in the very depth of winter after a heavy fall of snow and only Farmer Evans and the Reverend Joseph Lancaster managed to arrive at the church for the morning service.

'Well,' said the Vicar laconically, 'I guess there's no point in having a service today.'

'Well that's not how I see it.' said Farmer Evans smartly. 'If only one cow turns up at feeding time, I still feed it.'

Diary Dates

Preachers at Burn Park for December and January:

December		January	
1 st	Rev. Derek Aldridge	5 th	Rev Rosemary Nash <i>Covenant Service</i>
8 th	Mr Bob Howarth	12 th	Rev Richard Firth
15 th	Rev Rosemary Nash <i>Sacrament</i>	19 th	Mr Peter Allan-Robson
22 nd	Mrs Suzy Wake <i>Carol Service</i>	26 th	Mrs Maureen Simpson
29 th	Local Arrangements		

Important Dates to note around and about:

Sat 7 Dec: start 2:30 p.m.: Park Productions Carol Singing: Highcliffe & Dovecote Meadow

Wed 18 Dec: 6 p.m.: Burn Park: Community Carol Service for all

Thu 19 Dec: 2 p.m.: John Carter's house: Bible Study

Sat 21 Dec: start 2:30 p.m.: Park Productions Carol Singing: Keelboat Lodge & Barnes Court

Mon 23 Dec: start 6 p.m.: Park Productions Carol Singing around people's houses

Thu 16 Jan: 2 p.m.: John Carter's house: Bible Study

Sat 18 Jan: 10 – 11:30 a.m.: Burn Park: monthly Coffee Morning

Sat 8 Feb: 10 a.m.: Castletown Methodist Church: Marriage & Relationship consultation: it is essential that prior to this day, those wishing to take part should read the information to prepare for the discussions. All information can be found on the internet at <https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/the-methodist-church/marriage-and-relationships-2019/> Copies of the report can also be obtained from Susan Mountford (Circuit Administrator)

*For more details about these and other events,
please see your weekly printed notices or posters on the notice board*

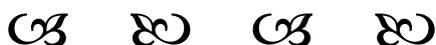
*If you have any notices to be published,
or articles for the next magazine,
please contact Suzy Wake
at Church, tel: **5226257**,*

*by e-mail on WaSus654@aol.com,
or at 119, Tunstall Rd, by 9 p.m. Thursday.*



BURN PARK CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT

Burn Park Methodist Church exists to worship God,
and make the Love of Jesus known,
in our welcome, outreach, and care for all.



Minister: Rev. Rosemary Nash: Tel: 0191 5652221

93, Dunelm, SR2 7QX: revnash@hotmail.com

Circuit Safeguarding Officer: Margaret Brown 0191 5285069

brown1792003@yahoo.co.uk

Regional Child Protection Officer: Carolyn Godfrey tel: 07534346374

email ne.methodist.safeguarding@gmail.com

To book rooms for an event, please contact Melvyn Morgan on Tel: 5251930.



Regular Events at this Church:

Sunday

10:30 a.m.	Morning Worship & Sunday Club
11 a.m.	Mustard Seed Church
1 p.m. - 3 pm	Deeper Life Church Worship
6 p.m.	Churches Together Drop-In for Homeless people

Monday

10 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Drop-in Lunch
1:30 - 3:30 p.m.	Ladybirds (1 st Monday of month)

Tuesday

11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Lunch Club
7:30 p.m. - 9 p.m.	Park Productions

Wednesday

6 p.m. - 8 p.m.	Deeper Life Church Bible Study
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Thursday

10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Coffee@Burn Park
1 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.	Stroke Club
2 p.m.	Bible Study (3 rd week of month)
6 p.m. - 8 p.m.	Beavers, Cubs, & Scouts

Friday

9:30 a.m. - 11 a.m.	Toddlers Group
4 p.m. - 9 p.m.	Ballet Classes

Saturday

10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Coffee Mornings (3 rd week of month)
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