

# Messenger



**Market Drayton Methodist Circuit**  
**Circuit magazine**  
**Winter 2018**

## Message from Ruth

Dear friends,

I wonder what Christmas Day looks like for you? Personally, I'm looking forward to a predominantly pyjamaed Christmas Day, I would say that I won't appear in church in my pyjamas but I'm not promising anything! Of course, as I write this, that all seems like some time off yet, until I'm reminded that it's less than 3 weeks away now! Am I ready? Heck no! I'm always quite jealous of those who have all their presents bought and wrapped by mid-October and cards all in the post in good time. The problem is, Christmas is coming, whether I'm ready or not.

In her book 'Beginnings and Endings' (BRF Daily Bible Readings from Advent to Epiphany), Maggi Dawn writes this:

"I was a PhD student and an ordinand taking two courses simultaneously, each with a deadline. Then I found out I was pregnant. I was blissfully happy about it: this was a baby I had longed for. All the same, my circumstances were undeniably less than ideal, and I spent some sleepless nights trying to figure out how to make all the pieces fit together... I went to see my tutor, a kind and humorous woman who could be formidable when necessary, and together we discovered that, to date, there was no policy on maternity leave or funding breaks for pregnant ordinands... I sat in my tutor's study while she phoned the relevant [people] trying to get some kind of game plan together. After a number of long frustrating calls, I heard the mumble of a man's voice at the other end of the phone, and then my tutor's terse reply: 'It may well be that you don't have any policies. But what you don't seem to understand is that the birth of this baby cannot be postponed. This baby will be born in four months' time whether you have policies or not.' I like the fact that the coming of God into our world was realized in something as inconvenient, unpredictable

and untidy as the birth of a baby. A baby will be born when it's ready to be born...whether we are ready or not, and in any case, who is ever ready for a baby? Regardless of theologies and postmodern theories and new ideas of Church, and irrespective of our programmes and plans and energy levels, God will come and be born in our world."

We will never manage to do enough to be ready to welcome Jesus into our lives, but like the best kind of guest, Jesus doesn't care if the carpet isn't hoovered, or the dinner's not quite timed to perfection, or even if the all the decorations didn't quite make it up...He'd rather we spent time with Him.

May you receive the blessing of the Christ-child and all His gifts into your lives this Christmas.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Ruth', with a small flourish or mark below it.

# BAPTISMS AND MEMBERSHIPS

In January, MDMC will have the pleasure to witness the baptism of 3 members of our church family, William Cooper, Joe Perry and Jacob Savill, and the reaffirmation of James Dow. We invited them to share a little of their journey to baptism with you, to explain to us why this day will be so very special for them:

'This year, I have been given the opportunity to be baptised in January. I wanted to be baptised last year when my brother did, but my parents advised me to wait until the time was right. Back then, my faith wasn't as strong as it is now, but I guess I just wanted to be baptised last time because I wanted to get wet. However, in April 2018, my family drove to Scarborough for an Easter conference for Christians called ECG (Equipping, Calling, Going). I was placed in the 8-11 group and it was there where I first encountered God's spirit fully, and my heart knew straight away that I needed to be devoted to him in baptism at the next chance I got. It wasn't for fun; it was truly my decision and my trust in the Lord that took over from there. This will be a symbol to show my commitment to God, and doing so, I have plucked up the courage to ask some of my friends to come and share the moment. Now, I can see the amount of opportunities that have been placed in front of me, and I hope, as one of the Lord's children, I can pass on the flame and encourage others to be part of this journey, to know Jesus and love him, like I now do.

Peter said, "Change your life. Turn to God and be baptised, each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so your sins are forgiven. Receive the Holy Spirit. The promise is targeted to you and your children but also to all who are far away-whomever, in fact, our Master God invites." **Acts 2:38-39.**'

- Jacob Savill

'Ever since I could understand about God and baptism, I assumed I had already been baptised as a baby, but last year when other members of our church were baptised, I asked my dad about it. He told me that I had been dedicated instead of being baptised. This means that my parents made a promise to bring me up learning to know God, so that when I was old enough I could make my own choice about my faith.

Since discovering this I have been thinking about baptism a lot. I think it's a step closer to God, I have already had an amazing life with God anyway, but Baptism will bring me closer to God and show everyone that I am his follower. I am glad to be taking such a large step in my life, especially with two of my closest friends who I have known all my life.'

- William Cooper

'I feel that now I'm eleven I feel that it's the right time to get a closer connection with God. If I become a member of the church and learn more about God my life will hopefully change and get better. I would be honoured to become a member of the church and take great pride in the things I do as a Christian.'

- Joe Perry

'My love for Jesus is strong and continues to grow day by day and I clearly belong to him, my life has changed dramatically since I accepted Jesus into my life, I put my trust in Jesus that he will guide me and empower me throughout my life, my decision to reaffirm was a personal choice to show Jesus that I accept he is Lord and my Saviour and I am happy to be a Christian...'

- James Dow

The baptisms and reaffirmation will take place at Market Drayton Swimming Baths on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2019 at 4pm. Please join us there to support them. We have booked the pools for an hour so bring your swimming costumes for some fun afterwards. We will then go back to MDMC for some food. The morning service on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> January will be a membership and reaffirmation service.

# SHARING TESTIMONY

I received a message from Ness Savill this month explaining that she had heard Diana share testimony which she thought would be lovely to be shared with the whole circuit. I spoke to Diana about this and she was very unassuming, however she has agreed to share it with us:-

'Some weeks back I was excited when I downloaded a book called "Hearing God's voice made simple" by The Prayer Medic. I know that God is with me continually, guiding and protecting me but of course, we humans always want more. I felt that I wanted to receive pictures from God. In the book, the prayer medic says the best way to develop Spiritual visions is to practice and gave an exercise to do this.

I think God was being very encouraging to me because the first time I tried the 'exercise' I had this very clear picture which I shared with the MDMC congregation one Sunday morning as an encouragement to them:-

There was a long row, like a hedge, of very green plants all having new shoots, new growth. I felt that God was saying to me that this was how he saw the congregation at MDMC growing in their spiritual abilities, with the hedge showing them becoming united.

The shoots were a very clear bright green, and I thank God for this picture. For the next two days I had other pictures for myself and since then I have not seen any more. However, I take encouragement, as the prayer medic says that it can take a long time of perseverance 'practicing', sometimes months, to be blessed with these pictures.

*"Rejoice in hope, be patient, and be constant in prayer."* Romans 12:12'

- Diana Bromley

# IT WAS CHRISTMAS EVE AND THE WORLD STOOD STILL

A poem by Tim Carter

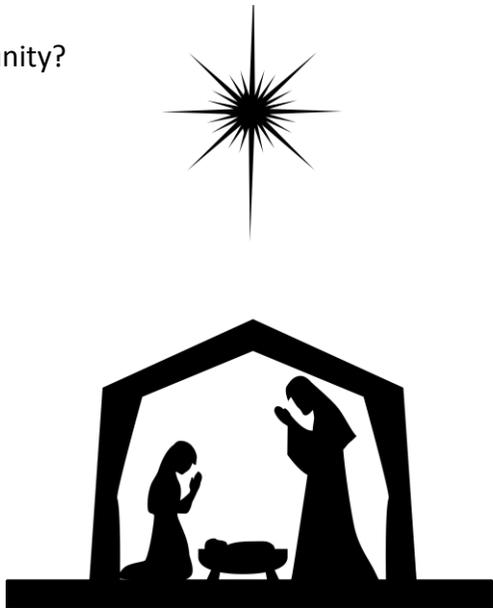
It was Christmas Eve  
And the world stood still  
Just for a moment

Waiting  
Wondering  
Hoping

Might it be that this time  
This time of all times  
The promise would be fulfilled  
And the wars would end  
And the crying cease  
And the people join hands in unity?

Waiting  
Wondering  
Hoping

Might it be this time  
This time of all times?



# ORGANISATION INFORMATION

## ReSource

Churches Alive in the Spirit and Active in Mission



ReSource's Vision is to see churches alive in the Spirit and active in mission. To see this vision achieved across the UK and in the mainstream denominations, they believe that their purpose and work is to enable little,

local and ordinary churches to engage with the Holy Spirit for renewal, discipleship and mission. They draw upon their roots in Anglican Renewal Ministries and Springboard, but are continually seeking to engage with the new things that God is doing by His Spirit to refresh and renew the church for faithful discipleship and mission.

ReSource has recently moved to a base in Telford and are looking to promote their work more widely. If you are interested in finding out more, please visit [www.resource-arm.net](http://www.resource-arm.net)

## WATCHFUL EXPECTANCY

From November 20<sup>th</sup> 'God at eventide' by Two Listeners

Wait before Me, in humble, silent anticipation.

Wait in entire and childlike obedience.

Wait as a servant anticipating his master's orders and wants.

Wait as a lover eager to not the first suggestion of a need, and to hasten to supply it.

Wait for my orders and commands. Wait for my guidance, my supply.

Well, indeed, in such a life may you be of good cheer. Can a life be dull and dreary when always there is that watchful expectancy, always that anticipation of glad surprise, always that wonder of fulfilment, joy of supply?

Shared by a member of MDMC

# FIVE SHORT PRAYERS FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

By Lynne Newland (from the Methodist Church website)

Jesus our Prince of Peace, we pray that every time a carol is sung, a Christmas greeting spoken, a nativity play performed, that your name be honoured and glorified and that hard hearts be melted to receive you afresh. **Amen**

Lord Jesus, from the repetitive muzak carols heard in every shop and supermarket to the frantic shopping for glitzy gifts, may we, your disciples, be ready to grasp every opportunity to share the true meaning of Christmas with others. **Amen**

Lord Jesus as we await your coming, help us to look for you in the hoodie on our estate, the beggar on the street, the outcasts in our society and open our hearts to love others as you do. **Amen**

As people strip away the Christmas wrappings may they find your precious gift of love within. Come Lord Jesus, Advent is ending. **Amen**

Lord, I pray that your Spirit of truth and love will fill the hearts of those for whom Christmas has no meaning. **Amen**

# CIRCUIT CHRISTMAS CARDS

The young people across our circuit have been busy designing a Christmas Card for us. Congratulations to our winner, William Cooper, whose design will be a part of our Circuit Christmas Cards.

This year we will have packs of 10 Christmas Cards for sale with 2 designs. One will be Will's design and one will be created from the Buttercross to Bethlehem artwork by Nicole Fox. Packs will cost £4 and all profits will go to support our local CAP. Please speak to a steward or email [circuitadmin@mdmc.org.uk](mailto:circuitadmin@mdmc.org.uk) if you wish to purchase a pack of Christmas Cards. They will be available from 16th December.



**THIS  
ADVENT,  
WHY NOT  
TRY A...**



## Reverse Advent Calendar?

18

6

Take a box and stick a calendar to it. Each day add an item and cross it off on the calendar. After Christmas take all the items along to one of the donation points.

Market Drayton foodbank is currently in need of:

UHT Milk, Sponge Puddings, Long Life Juice, Tinned Fruit, Pasta Sauce, Tinned Meat (corned beef, ham, spam etc), Biscuits, Laundry Washing Powder, Washing Up Liquid, Tinned Fish, Cat Food, Jam, Custard, Coffee, Tea, Shampoo/Conditioner, Tinned Veg, Tinned Potatoes, Soup, Men's Toiletries, Rice Pudding, Tinned Tomatoes

The up to date list can be found at  
[marketdrayton.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food](http://marketdrayton.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food)

*“It is Christmas every time you let God love others through you ... yes, it is Christmas every time you smile at your brother and offer him your hand.”*

– Mother Theresa of Calcutta (1910-1997)

# Dates for your diary

## ASHLEY METHODIST CHURCH

**Nativity and Carol Service – 23<sup>rd</sup> December 10.30am**

**Family Christmas Celebration – 25<sup>th</sup> December 10.30am**

## HINSTOCK METHODIST CHURCH

**Carol Service – 23<sup>rd</sup> December 10.15am**

Hinstock will have a reduced number of services over the winter months. Please refer to the circuit plan for further information. This can be found at [www.mdmd.org.uk/downloads](http://www.mdmd.org.uk/downloads) or check the noticeboard outside the church for details of the next service.

## MARKET DRAYTON METHODIST CHURCH

**Christmas Praise@4 – 9<sup>th</sup> December 4pm**

**Nativity Service – 16<sup>th</sup> December 10.30am**

**Youth Choir Concert – 22<sup>nd</sup> December 7pm**

**Carol Service – 23<sup>rd</sup> December 6pm**

**Christmas Eve Communion – 24<sup>th</sup> December 11.30pm**

**Family Christmas Celebration – 25<sup>th</sup> December 10am**

**Baptisms and Reaffirmation – 19<sup>th</sup> January  
4pm @ MD Swimming Baths**

**Membership Service – 20<sup>th</sup> January 10.30am @MDMC**



ASHLEYMETHODIST.CO.UK



HINSTOCK



MDMC.ORG.UK