

# The Messenger

**Christ Church Barnstaple**  
Methodist & United Reformed Church



“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given.....And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” *Isaiah 9:6*

**Dec 2024 - Jan 2025**




The Winter Fair was hugely popular with a lovely community feel, and was great fun



## December Diary

Sun	1st	10.30am	Morning Worship & Holy Communion: Rev. Sue Macbeth
		3pm	Causeway Christmas Service
Fri	6th	7.30pm	Barnstaple Jubilee Singers Christmas Celebration
Sun	8th	10.30am	Morning Worship: Local Arrangement
		4.30pm	Café Church
Mon	9th	10am	Sound it Out
		2.30pm	Friendship Group
Sun	15th	10.30am	Family Service: Rev. Marilyn Tricker
Sun	22nd	10.30am	Morning Worship: Alison Cairns
		6.30pm	Carol Service
Tue	24th	4.30pm	Christingle Service
Wed	25th	10.30am	Christmas Day Service: Rev. Stephen Caddick
Sun	29th	10.30am	Morning Worship: Rev. Dr. Tracey Darling
<b>Regular meetings :</b> Tuesdays - Rainbows and Brownies 5.30pm (Term-time only) Wednesdays - Parents & Toddlers 9.30am (Term-time only) Thursdays - Bible Study 2pm; Circuit Zoom Service 7pm Fridays - Hobnob 10am (except Bank Holidays)			

## January Diary

Sun	5th	10.30am	Morning Worship: Local Arrangement
		3pm	Causeway Service
<b>Mon</b>	<b>6th</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>**The church will be open for prayer from 10am - 12 noon (see page 4) **</b> 
Sun	12th	10.30am	Morning Worship: Deacon Joan Cole
		4.30pm	Café Church
Mon	13th	10am	Sound it Out
		2.30pm	Friendship Group
Sun	19th	10.30am	Covenant Service: Rev. Stephen Caddick
Sun	26th	10.30am	Morning Worship: Mrs Brenda Prentice
Mon	27th	10am	Sound it Out
		2.30pm	Friendship Group

There is no Messenger deadline because - at the time of going to print - no-one has offered to take over production (see page 15)



## Message from Mrs Paula Littlewood

Dear Friends,

Sunday 1st December brings with it the beginning of Advent and all the excitement that Christmas brings for children and adults like me who have never grown up! However, Christmas is loud, isn't it with so much expectation and that brings with it pressure that many find hard to bear, especially if facing Christmas on their own.

The Methodist Church's Christmas campaign for 2024 is called  
**"Hush the Noise"**

which are words from the carol "*It came upon the midnight clear*". This is an invitation to hush the noise and to listen for the love song that the angels bring and are inviting us to sing. The hope is that churches throughout our Circuit will use these resources which cover the period throughout Advent, Christmas and up to Epiphany.

The Church of England is adopting a similar theme which is  
**"Follow the Star: Calm and Bright"**

and which draws on another well-known carol, "*Silent Night*." The focus is on how to find calm during Advent, with reflections offering people a chance to pause and prepare for calmness during the busy season. Then from Christmas Day to Epiphany the focus will be on "bright".

I really like the way both these Churches are focussing on concepts of quiet and calmness so we can listen for the gentle breathing and cry of the baby, Jesus, and share in the joy of his birth with his parents, the shepherds and angels. If you really want to 'Step into the Story', then you need only to turn to the  
**URC family Advent resource pack**  
which is particularly aimed at children.

All these resources are easy to find on the internet but, if you need help accessing them, then just ask one of the elders or me and we can help you find them. I wish you a peaceful Advent, joy at Christmas and the mysticism that is in Epiphany as you follow the Star into 2025.

I leave you with the opening liturgy from the Methodist Church's campaign to "Hush the Noise":

*Advent dawns with lights strung high and music everywhere,  
Sights and smells abound around,  
Senses assaulted and confused,*

*O hush the noise, Let's hear the angels sing.  
Amid the lists and cards and gifts,  
Amid the pleas and "please can we",  
Amid the chaos of the world,  
O hush the noise, Let's hear the angels sing.*

*Let's seek to see and seek to hear.  
Let's seek to feel and seek to know.  
Let's seek to find peace and love.  
O hush the noise, Let's hear the angels sing*

*Paula*

## **Looking to the future – seeking God’s call (thoughts from Rev. Marilyn and Rev. Sue)**

“Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action”

This is the motto of the World Day of Prayer movement – a good theme for us here at Christ Church, across the Circuit, and beyond.

Consider our: Worship - Community Life - Discipleship  
Pastoral Care - Ecumenical Links

God calls us as his disciples to renewed commitment and service. There is much to celebrate, to give thanks for; there are opportunities and challenges for which we need God’s guidance and wisdom.

**There are also many Practicalities to consider:**

**Property - Pounds (£££) - People (to do jobs)  
Prayer and Praise - Publicity**

Kathy Jeacock, our treasurer, has been clear in outlining the financial challenges which **MUST** be faced now (she set this out in the November Messenger and at the Church Meeting – copies available)

### **So: what can we do NOW?**

#### **This month (December) ... “Informed Prayer”**

Even in the midst of the Christmas decorations at church: look out for the *information board and leaflets*. There will be a box with opportunities to share your prayers and ideas.

#### **In January ... Prayerful Action** *(the board and box will still be there)*

**Monday January 6th (Epiphany) – the church  
will be open for prayer between 10am - 12 noon.**

Come any time, stay for as long as you are able.  
Tea and coffee will be available. More details to follow.

**The Methodist Covenant Service on Sunday Jan. 19th** is a time to renew our commitment to God; Consider what new commitments (whether money, talents or time) God is calling you to commit – and take action on this.

Lord, you call us to your service, Each in our own way.

Some to caring, loving, healing; Some to preach, or pray;

Some to work with quiet learning, truth discerning, day by day.

*Marjorie Dobson (Singing the Faith 664)*

*Rev. Marilyn and Rev. Sue*

**Rev. Tracey Darling (our superintendent minister) sent this message around the Circuit churches. It was read out on Sunday Nov. 24th.**

*To keep everyone informed of what is happening in the circuit, here is an update. The Circuit Invitation Committee met on Monday (Nov. 18th) to pray and discuss the Diaconal profiles that have been received. We will send our thoughts to Deacon Karen McBride, Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order. However, we must remember that Deacons are directly stationed.*

*We will know whether we have been successfully matched around the 9th-10th January. Please continue to pray for everyone involved in the stationing process - those Deacons in stationing, circuits seeking Deacons and those involved in matching Deacons to circuits. Thank you,*

*Tracey*

### **Christmas Trees!**

As we did last year, we invite you to bring a Christmas card "to all at Christ Church" to decorate our tree in the vestibule, and a donation to our Christmas charity.

Don't forget to visit the Christmas Tree Festival at The Parish Church of St. Peter & St. Mary Magdalene (see below), and look out for the Christ Church tree.

Many thanks to Elaine and Eff for organising this.







## ***Festival of Christmas Trees***

**At Barnstaple Parish Church**

**Thursday 12th December 10am - 8pm**  
**13th - 16th December 10am - 6pm**

Come and see a spectacular array of colour as we showcase our community's beautifully decorated Christmas trees here in the church. It includes a daily programme of music provided by local community and school choirs, music groups and orchestras.

**Refreshments available**      **Free admission**

## Thank you from the Food Bank for our Harvest Donations



We donated:

113.60 kg of food

Cash (including Gift Aid) £98.45

### **Notes from the Elders meeting on 4th November 2024**

- Reverend Marilyn Tricker opened the Zoom meeting with a prayer.
- Minutes of the last meeting were approved.
- News of the fellowship was shared.
- Safeguarding issue regarding the need to have the front door monitored at all times when the church is open was discussed.
- Election of Elders – Process in hand for the election of Elders at the Annual Church Meeting on the 17th November.
- Community Links – the need to restart Community Links meetings was discussed and a further discussion was had regarding the idea of approaching previous providers of grants for future funding.
- The fund raising for the emergency lights is progressing but more money is still required to pay for this work.
- Concerns over the future viability of the church finances were discussed.
- Young Church – Yeo Valley School are to hold their carol service on the morning of the 16th December. There are now four new families in Parents and Toddlers.
- The Jubilee Singers are giving a concert on the 6th December.
- Communications – to date no one has come forward to volunteer to take on the jobs of producing the Messenger and updating the church website. More people are required to cover the usage of the Digibox.
- Property - Outside painting and other external jobs will be done when weather allows. Elaine Stevens has done lots of work weeding Noah's Park and the rear yard. Further work to be carried out to fix the front door closer and to repair the microphone socket adjacent to the organ.
- Thanks were expressed to Liz and Bruce for their work on the Messenger and the updating of the church website.
- Reverend Marilyn closed the meeting at 9:05 with a prayer.

*Date of next meeting – 3rd December 2024*





## A message from Christian Aid

No room for comfort and joy... when you've left everything behind to survive.

In South Sudan, Shede and thousands like her are fending off hunger and malnutrition in Wedweil Refugee Settlement.

With very little to call their own, comfort and joy can seem far from their day-to-day reality.

**Shede:** *'I did not come with anything. No table, no teapot, no chair, no bed. Nothing.'*

It wasn't just belongings that Shede lost as she fled the conflict in Sudan, her brothers were killed and she's unable to contact her husband. Now she tries to make a temporary shelter feel like a home for her young children, but it's hard: *'I need clean clothes, a bed and a blanket.'*

Could you support someone like Shede to buy food and supplies that will protect their family from hunger and malnutrition?

**£15** could buy the blanket that brings comfort to a child who is far from home.

**£40** could fund the cooking pots that would mean someone could prepare meals and make a living.

Will you help share comfort and joy this Christmas? There will be envelopes available in the foyer should you wish to donate to Christian Aid this Christmas. This is not Christ Church's nominated charity this year but if you feel moved to help people like Shede in addition to your other giving please place your gift in one of the Christian Aid envelopes and put it into the Sunday offertory plate and it will find its way to me. Many thanks, Janet.

Your generosity and support are much appreciated, *Janet & Paula*

## Barnstaple Jubilee Singers Christmas Celebration



Christ Church Barnstaple  
Friday 6th Dec at 7.30pm



Guests: Harmony 4/5

Donations for Christ Church Barnstaple and  
NDADA (North Devon Against Domestic Abuse)

FREE entry - Raffle - Refreshments

Crossfire Logo



# Café Church



Dave  
talking  
about  
Crossfire



Making a  
joyful  
sound



## *Hobnob...at half term*

Children  
enjoyed icing  
Jennifer's  
cupcakes and  
biscuits



## Bygone Times: Knitting for Charity at Christ Church, Barnstaple *(Date unknown)*





## Young Families Work News

### Café Church and 'Something More'...

Remembrance Sunday this year brought with it, not only the thoughts, emotions and gratitude always inextricably linked with it, but also the longing and hope for peace. So it followed, that Peace became the theme for November's Café Church – Peace and Reconciliation. Little did we think that we were going to have the opportunity to hear firsthand from two people who have been working towards Peace and Reconciliation with a charity in Northern Ireland...



...We were blessed with the help and knowledge of Kathy's house visitors – Dave and Sheila Masters – her brother and sister-in-law. They brought with them their experience of working for many years with and for the Crossfire Trust in South Armagh, Northern Ireland. The Trust – a registered charity – was started in 1984 "to make God's love real to people". Still continuing to thrive and develop it cares for the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of people mainly in South Armagh. The initiative was originally started in a simple way some years earlier in 1978 when Ian Bothwell, fresh from Bible College, headed to Crossmaglen in South Armagh in response to watching a TV documentary about the troubles in Northern Ireland when they were at their height. Through practical action, talking with people and bringing them together in a number of ways, Ian sought with others, to restore hope, to explore major peace and reconciliation issues, to address sectarianism and racism and to remind people of God and his love for them all – not as Protestants or Catholics, just Christians. Based in Darkley House since 1986 the Trust has provided supported accommodation for people in housing crisis or who are experiencing homelessness for whatever reason. In addition, it continues to offer benefits and housing advice and a wide range of services to the community, including furniture, clothing, food and counselling. Now, more recently, another centre has opened in Crossmaglen – Something More – a vision of 20 years coming to fruition, which offers a café and drop in centre, a food bank, and a clothing store, with yet more plans to develop it further – another place of Peace and Reconciliation.

As people arrived at Café Church, thanks to Dave and Sheila, they found on each table a Crossfire Wordsearch and a Logo to colour in, accompanied by the word Peace. Everyone was then invited to go to the activity table and assemble a cut-out meal before the worship and story time. This was to emphasize the importance of sitting down, eating and talking together, and making friends – in the way we do every month at Café Church. We were to find out later how particularly relevant this is to the sort of project we were to hear about – an important step towards the building up of peace between people. Other activities at Café Church included decorating – and eating(!) – shortbread hands, highlighting the need for us all to join hands with others here and around the world in order to work together for peace; and also tackling the intricacies of making friendship bracelets! The poppies and their meaning for Remembrance Day were not forgotten. In her introduction to the worship, Alison talked about the significance of both red and white ones. We heard then about the Crossfire Project from Dave and Sheila. The children remained very quiet during this time, joining in afterwards with Make me a Channel of Your

Peace. But then came the final song, Give me Joy (Peace) in my Heart which gave them the opportunity to make a very noisy and joyful sound with the percussion instruments!

Thank you so much to Dave and Sheila for sharing their story – so good to have the opportunity of hearing about peace and reconciliation work from those involved. They will be returning to Northern Ireland in the near future where they will be able to continue working with the Crossfire Trust, but now as volunteers. And thank you so much to everyone for another lovely Café Church – and to Eff for yet more apple crumble! For more information visit [www.crossfiretrust.net](http://www.crossfiretrust.net)

*Anthea*

### **Parent and Toddlers**

Our happy group continues with several birthdays, we are all looking forward to December when Reverend Marilyn and Christopher will tell the Christmas story with music and on the following week we have a little party with presents for the children.

*Joy*

### **Sunday Club**

After the solemnity of remembrance in November, we look forward to the excitement of preparing for Christmas in December. The themes for the four Sundays of Advent are hope, love, joy and peace respectively. We are also pleased to be joining All Age worship on the morning of 15th December.

The 'Roots' programme for January and February 2025 is now available. Once the school Spring term begins, the sessions will be from either Luke or John's Gospels.

Sunday Club would like to thank the Seymours, both for their commitment as one of our families and to Liz for support during recent sessions.

*Maureen*

**As always, thank you for all your support and prayers over the past year. Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and many blessings for 2025,**

*The Young Families Work Team*



**Hobnob: Fridays 10.00 – 11.30**



Everyone is welcome at Hobnob - time to meet and chat, & enjoy coffee and cake (or sausage rolls and cheese scones!)

Hobnob Christmas holiday dates:

The last Hobnob before Christmas will be on Dec. 13th

There will be NO Hobnob on Dec. 20th or 27th , or on Jan. 3rd

Hobnob will restart on Friday Jan. 10th

## Friendship Group

We have had two really interesting meetings:

On Monday 14th October a large group enjoyed a well presented and illuminating talk by two representatives from Barclays Bank. Some of us just did not realise the extent to which the scammers go to groom innocent members of the public. We were made aware that the scams are becoming much more sophisticated by the day and we must be on our guard at all times.

Rachel and Tracey who gave the talk were very easy to listen to and explained things simply; to start with it was in the form of a quiz. This got the talk off to a lively start and they were then able to begin the serious business of making us aware of some of the latest scams and what to look out for to avoid.

The talk lasted about one hour when we were all glad to have a cup of tea, delicious cakes and a chat with our friends.

On October 28th forty people were really entertained by a fascinating talk and slide show by Reverend Jonathan on his four months ministering on the Falkland Islands, some 13 years after the conflict with Argentina. (photos - page 20)

He spoke of the many memorials over the islands in particular the site located on the hill overlooking Goose Green commemorating the battle where Capt. H Jones fell.

Only 3000 inhabitants live on the islands centred mainly around Port Stanley. There is an amazing variety of wildlife from penguins, dolphins, seals, various species of bird life as well as domestic animals mainly sheep.

There is only one hospital staffed predominately by military personnel, at one time midwives from Barnstaple worked there. To add to the West-Country involvement the island is policed by Devon & Cornwall Constabulary. Jonathan recalled one amusing incident when he and another man bravely (or foolishly) rescued an Emperor penguin that had wandered into a minefield area only to be told by the vet that this was a regular occurrence!

Future meetings:

December 9th - Flowers with Jess Bannister

January 13th - Bring and Share Afternoon Tea

January 27th - Freedom Centre with Roger Bartlett

*Jennifer & Sandy*



Volunteers are needed for welcoming people at the door for our Sunday morning service, and to do Bible readings. Please let me know if you are able to help. Thank you,



*Jennifer*

## Causeway

Our November Causeway Service began with the good news that Steve is returning to Uganda very soon to help train students at Kira farm.

Brenda Prentice was our speaker and 7 of our friends became actors to retell the story Jesus told about the Good Samaritan. David was the unfortunate traveller who was attacked by Aidan the robber. Thomas the Priest and Sarah the church-goer refused to help. However Steve the Samaritan rendered first aid and got the injured man to June the Inn keeper with the help of Jo the donkey. Brenda's message focused on kindness and friendship and she reminded us that our very best friend is Jesus. We did of course sing and even dance to 'What a friend we have in Jesus'.

Brenda gave each one of us a Friendship bracelet to wear home.

You will have a very warm welcome if you join us on December 1st for our Christmas Causeway.



*The Causeway Team*

## Amigos and Kira Farm

*"I am with you, and I will protect you  
wherever you go" Genesis 28:15*

### From Kira Farm:

Kira Farm is once again preparing for the 2024 students to return home as they are reaching the end of their year's training. One of their final learning goals will have been their practical business training, where, for two weeks, they will have created and run their own small businesses. The experience will have helped them put their skills into practice and overcome any challenges, equipping them to turn their knowledge into real ventures. They will, too, have looked at ways to use what they've learned from their time on Kira, to transform not only their own lives but also those of their families and people in their communities. Gloria, a graduate from last year is one example of what it is possible to achieve. She says:

*"I am determined to help other people succeed. I already train four young people in tailoring. I teach others conservation farming so they have enough food and I support my siblings' education. I feel beautiful and loved".*

In addition to completing final skills targets for their students, Kira has also played host to Pilton Community College giving the visitors the opportunity to immerse themselves in the unique experience. One of the highlights has been their work on an eco-toilet project at the local primary school, where they constructed walls by recycling old bottles - a fantastic hands-on lesson in sustainability.



(cont.)

# Causeway



Brenda Prentice helped the actors bring the story of 'The Good Samaritan' to life



Friendship bracelets were distributed to all to wear home

## Amigos News



Gloria— A Happy Tailor!



Our wonderful handmade items to sell

## More Winter Fair Photos



The Children's Stall



The ever popular Cake Stall



Our prayers as we bid farewell to the 2024 Kira Farm students as they return home:

- For courage and confidence to try out and share their new skills as they return home
- For wisdom and creativity to bring their business ideas to life
- For lasting impact from their new skills, making a positive difference in their communities

#### From Amigos:

Joseph, the Family Sponsorship Co-ordinator, and his wife, Margaret, recently went to the Global Missions Conference of Nations (GMCN) in Nairobi, Kenya which brought together over 340 attendees from around the world. At the conference, Joseph set up a beautiful display of hand crafted items to raise funds and awareness for Amigos Worldwide attracting a lot of interest in Amigos. Many attendees were drawn to learn more about the charity's work in Uganda and its new initiatives in Southern Sudan – which we mentioned in last months' Messenger - with brochures on hand to share the charity's mission and impact.

Earlier in November, I had the pleasure of meeting – by Zoom - people both from the team in Amigos Barnstaple and also from the team in Amigos Uganda, along with other supporters of Amigos Worldwide and returned Kira Farm graduates. We met Joseph the Family Sponsorship Co-ordinator, Joshua, responsible for Kira Farm, and Robina, the Country Director of Amigos Uganda. They all spoke of their work in such a loving caring, understanding way; completely committed to what they do and the disadvantaged people and groups with whom they work, and Robina particularly passionate about the humanitarian /community empowerment work of Amigos Worldwide. She focused on the youth of Uganda, the need to give them a chance in life - on the need to educate them, train them, empower them and care for them. The majority of the population in Uganda is young people (forecast to number over a billion 18-30 year olds in 2060) and without them there will be no future. They need to be trained that all are equal, that everyone has worth and value and is special – particularly the girls - and to see one another through God's eyes. It was a true privilege to hear her and her colleagues speak and to be at the meeting.

Then from this meeting was launched the Amigos Christmas appeal, the theme focusing on the youth of Uganda 'a vibrant and dynamic group with immense potential'. It aims to raise money that will support young Ugandans, to develop skills, to thrive, and to bring about positive change within their communities.

We pray that the appeal will inspire and make a meaningful difference in the lives of young people in Uganda.

Amigos Worldwide: [www.amigos.org.uk](http://www.amigos.org.uk)

*Anthea*

### Help Needed Please

So far, no-one has offered to take over production of The Messenger, so - sadly this may be the last edition, at least for a while. If anyone could maybe produce something smaller and simpler, it would at least be a way of everyone keeping in touch with each other and with Christ Church news. This seems to be needed even more as we face the challenges ahead of us at the moment. If you are able to use a computer and email, you would be able to do it! The Christ Church website will also need to be looked after; are you - or is someone you know - able to take this over, and update it once a month with our church services?

Please get in touch as soon as possible if you would like more information

**seymourejs@gmail.com**

It has been a privilege to serve Christ Church and be part of the church family, we will miss you all - when we finally move!!

*Bruce and Liz*

### Events

We had a very successful Winter Fair with lots of stalls, raffle and cakes and light lunches. It was a day of fun and laughter, with a great outreach to our local community. (photos - pages 1 & 13)

Thanks so much to all who gave items, helped on the day and all who attended.

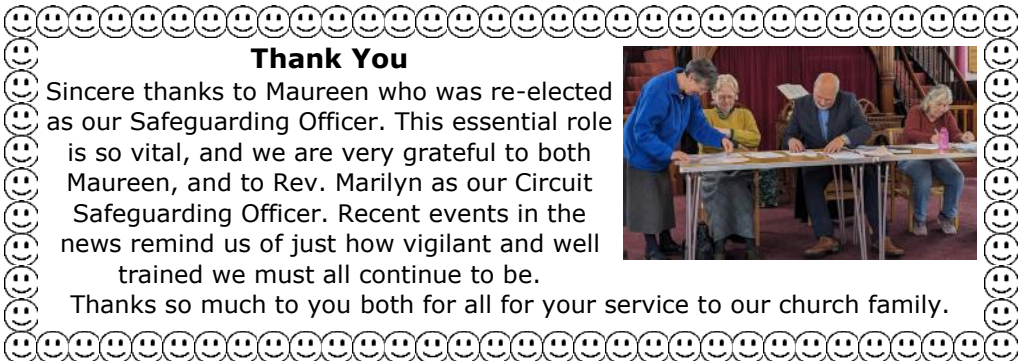
A great day of fund raising for Christ Church, we raised **£1,400.55** which was incredible! This brings the **total raised from our 3 events to £2,296** - such an amazing achievement whilst sharing great fellowship and fun together.

Sadly it was Liz and Bruce's last event and we wish them all the best for the future.

We hope to continue fund raising, perhaps on a slightly smaller scale, but we hope to run our Annual Quiz, an Afternoon Tea and a Soup Lunch.

If anyone wants to join us or has any ideas for fund raising activities, please come and see us.

*Joy & Elaine*



### Thank You

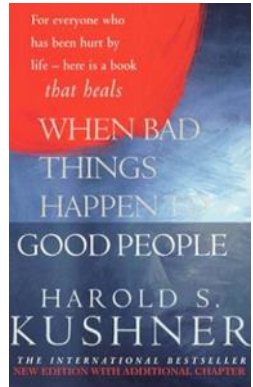
Sincere thanks to Maureen who was re-elected as our Safeguarding Officer. This essential role is so vital, and we are very grateful to both Maureen, and to Rev. Marilyn as our Circuit Safeguarding Officer. Recent events in the news remind us of just how vigilant and well trained we must all continue to be.

Thanks so much to you both for all for your service to our church family.



## BOOK REVIEW AND MORE

When Bad Things Happen to Good People - Harold S Kushner



This wonderful and insightful book has been around for over twenty years but I have only just got round to reading it. Although some of the terminology used would not be acceptable today, it is still as relevant now as it was when first written.

Harold S Kushner is an American Rabbi who suffered a family tragedy in his early married life. He and his wife welcomed Aaron, a seemingly healthy boy into the family. It soon became apparent that Aaron was not thriving, so his health was examined and eventually he was found to have an incurable, very rare condition called 'progeria' or rapid ageing. It was unlikely that the boy would live beyond early teens and his growth would be seriously stunted.

He and his wife were told the news on the day their daughter was born. One cannot begin to imagine how devastating the news was, made even more challenging on the day they had their daughter. The natural reaction of the young couple was 'why God' and the unfairness of the situation. Being a religious family they put all their energy into making life as happy and creative for the boy as possible. Harold always knew that one day he would write a book about his journey but the time was not right yet.

A few years after the death of Aaron at aged 14 he wrote this book. He gradually came to the understanding that God does not send bad things to people to test them. Bad things happen for many reasons, he was however able to focus on the good that came out of Aaron's life. He remembered the help and love he received from his congregation and his neighbours, how they made smaller sized playthings for him so he felt included.

Years after Aaron's death Harold was able to reflect on how much more he understood of the suffering of others and he felt it had helped his calling to ministry.

For anyone who has suffered loss or tragedy (and that must be everyone) I heartily recommend this book. It is not always easy to understand why such losses occur, but if we can accept that we have not personally been singled out, then we can start to work on all the positive aspects, such as the love of family, neighbours and friends. Harold reflected on all the love and care shown by friends, neighbours and congregation and knew that Aaron had brought joy to many.

'When Bad Things Happen To Good People' Harold S Kushner - Anchor Books

*Jennifer*

## GINGERBREAD MEN

Since I have had the pleasure and honour of helping the children ice cookies and cup cakes (see photo - page 8), I have tried quite a few variations on a theme to find the most foolproof gingerbread recipe. I finally ended up with the one below, very simple and foolproof. I found it works best with block margarine or 'baking block', they spread more with a soft margarine. (photo - page 20)

### Ingredients

12 oz (350g) plain flour	1/2 tsp bicarbonate of soda
2 tsp ground ginger	1 tsp ground cinnamon
4 1/2 oz (124g) butter or hard margarine	1 free-range egg
6 oz (175g) soft brown sugar	4 tbsp golden syrup

### Method

1. Gently melt the fat and golden syrup
2. Sift the dry ingredients and add the brown sugar, breaking up any large lumps
3. Lightly beat the egg and add to the dry ingredients together with the melted syrup and fat, collect into a ball and lightly knead until it looks smooth.
4. Wrap in cling film or place in a polythene bag and chill for at least half an hour
5. Have ready at least two large baking trays, lined with baking paper. Pre-heat the oven to 180C / 160 fan / Gas 4
6. Roll the dough to 1/4 inch (0.5cm) and cut out the shapes. I find it easiest to cut the dough in half and roll half at a time. Bake for 12 – 15 minutes. This dough works well to re-roll, as there will be lots of space between the biscuits.
7. When cool, ice and decorate if desired or call in the children to do it. This is the part they love.

Music to listen to: March of the Gingerbread men - English Folk Tune

Cooking in the kitchen - Malcolm Arnold

*Jennifer*



**Donations of over £1,800 have been received towards replacement of our Emergency Lighting. Many thanks to everyone who has contributed so far, more donations would - of course - be most welcome.**

## Greetings from Norah Bellot Court (December 2024)



Dear All,  
Thank you for supporting Norah Bellot Court over the last twelve months. I'm thinking of those who come here to preach and volunteer, those who visit residents, welcome our residents at Christ Church, whether for worship or activity groups, and those who pray for us.

Thank you too for all those who support the work of Methodist Homes through MHA Sunday contributions.

On a personal note, I'd like to let you know that I will be stepping away from my role as chaplain at Norah Bellot Court in January 2025. For the last ten years, I have been humbled and privileged to be a part of many people's lives. I can't begin to tell you what a great time I've had. I'm not disappearing completely, as I hope to stay on as a volunteer at Norah Bellot Court – once you're there, you find it hard to leave!

Thank you all for helping & supporting my work at  
Norah Bellot Court  
Wishing Everyone a Merry, Joyful, and Peaceful Christmas  
and a Happy New Year  
Sally



### **Offertory**

Offering our time, talents, prayers and money are all part of our worship. We give thanks for all these during our morning service. Although offertory bags are passed round during the service, we do not want anyone to feel uncomfortable if they don't put anything in - which could be for a number of reasons. We know God values whatever we offer Him, in whatever way we can.

An increasing number of people are donating money direct to the Church account by standing order. Many thanks to all of you.

**If you are a tax payer** and would like the church to claim back the tax on your giving or if you change your address or other details, please contact Janet Marshall or speak to a serving elder.

Cash offerings can be made at Christ Church on a Sunday morning. Gift Aid envelopes are also there if you wish to use one.

*Thank you*



## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Christ Church seeks to express  
the love of Christ for everyone.

**All at Christ Church Barnstaple are committed to  
the following Safeguarding Principles:**

- \* the care and nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children, young people and all adults.
- \* the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable.
- \* the establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is informed vigilance as to the dangers of abuse. (Methodist Safeguarding Guidelines, online: [www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk))

***If you are visiting Christ Church today we extend a warm welcome.  
Please take a Messenger home with our good wishes.***

**Circuit Superintendent:** Rev. Dr. Tracey Darling 01271 649955  
[tracey.darling@methodist.org.uk](mailto:tracey.darling@methodist.org.uk)

Revd. Stephen Caddick: 01271 345956

### **Elders:**

Alison Cairns (Church Secretary) 343154 [alisoncairns@hotmail.com](mailto:alisoncairns@hotmail.com)  
Kathy Jeacock (Church Treasurer) 373555

Chris Marshall  
Janet Marshall

Jenny Newman  
Shirley Baxter  
Anthea Coates

Staveley Dawson  
Elaine Stevens

Eff Poole & Liz Seymour (until end 2024) Jennifer Allen (from Jan 2025)

### **Pastoral Team (Church Friends):**

Shirley Baxter Elaine Stevens

**Room Bookings:** 371808

**Circuit Administrator:** 379116

### **Christian Aid Reps:**

Janet Marshall and Paula Littlewood

Janet: 01271 373013 [jcbmar18@btinternet.com](mailto:jcbmar18@btinternet.com)

**Website:** [www.christ-church-barnstaple.org.uk](http://www.christ-church-barnstaple.org.uk)

**Address:** 8 Bear Street, Barnstaple. EX32 7BU



*My Ministry in the Falklands, by Rev. Jonathan Richards*



## Friendship Group

Jonathan told many tales of his time on the islands, including trying to help an Emperor Penguin

### Remembrance Sunday Poppies



### Gingerbread Men Recipe

