

EDGE LANE AND CLAYTON METHODIST CHURCH

December Magazine 2024

Minister: Rev. Paul Welch



Preachers/Lectionary Readings

1st Dec Advent Sunday	11:00am	Mr Benjamin Allotey	Jeremiah Ch 33 v 14-16 Psalm 25 v 1-10 1 Thessalonians Ch 3 v 9-13 Luke Ch 21 v 25 -36
8th Dec	11:00am	Local Arrangement	Baruch Ch 5 v 1- 9 or Malachi Ch 3 v1-4 Philippians Ch 1 v 3-11 Luke Ch 3 v 1-6
15th Dec Nativity Play	11:00am	Young People & Rev. Ade Kila	Zephaniah Ch 3 v 14 -30 Philippians Ch 4 v 4 -7 Luke Ch 3 v 7 -18
22nd Dec Carol Service	11:00am	Rev. Paul Welch (HC)	Micah Ch 5 v 2-5a Psalm 80 v 1-7 Hebrews Ch 10 v 5 -10 Luke Ch 1 v 39 -45
25th Dec Christmas Day at Droylsden	10:00am	Rev. Paul Welch	Isaiah Ch 52 v 7-10 Psalm 98 Hebrews Ch 1 v 1 -4 John Ch 1 v 1 - 14
29th Dec	11:00am	Rev. Ade Kila	1 Samuel Ch 2 v 18 -20, 26 Psalm 148 Colossians Ch 3 v 12-17 Luke Ch 2 v 41-52
5th Jan Covenant Service Epiphany	11:00am	Rev. Paul Welch (HC)	Jeremiah Ch 31 v 7 -14 Psalm 147 v 12-20 Ephesians Ch 1 v 3-14 John Ch 1 v 10-18

Dear Friends,

As we approach Christmas and into the New Year, no doubt the cost of living crisis really will start to bite as fuel bills go up again. Many will have to make hard and difficult choices. This past year has been one of those years which we will remember for lots of different reasons.

Some things in life are totally out of our control and life and circumstances just happen. We cannot dictate what happens globally, nationally or locally and yet we do have a voice. We can use our voice, our platform, and our ability to choose to do the right thing to make small but significant contributions that make a difference. One of my previous churches used to collect money and then buy Morrison Vouchers which we would then take to the local school to distribute to families they knew who were in need. This made a massive impact upon those families. We as a congregation put together something that became bigger that demonstrated something of God's love for our local community. The people receiving the vouchers also had a Christmas card from the Church so they knew it was from us. One thing other churches do is to open up their buildings to make a warm space available for those who wish to come and be in that space.

As we approach Christmas, I am reminded of a young couple who were looking for some warm welcoming space to bring their child into the world. Sadly, nearly everywhere they looked they found no room that is until they came across a compassionate pub owner who had a bit of space in his shed. The space was gratefully accepted by the young couple and their new born baby was born in a warm available space. These were not ideal conditions for a child to be born in, yet the space did the job. The space was gladly offered and gladly accepted and made a massive difference to the life of that new family. Of course, this is part of the nativity story which signifies generosity, welcome and acceptance.

Over the winter there are warm welcoming spaces available. So, if you are struggling to heat your home, if you are feeling a bit lonely or isolated then remember the words of the Inn Keeper 'There is room and you are welcome'. Perhaps over this difficult period we might try and be more compassionate, caring and loving to those who might be struggling. Jesus' birth was a significant point in history and without it there would be no Christmas or no offer of God's love, forgiveness or hope.

Whoever you are, wherever you are, no matter what you have done or where you have been, God's love and acceptance as demonstrated through Jesus are offered freely. 'There is room'!

Every Blessing,

Rev Paul

CHURCH NOTICES

As we enter the month of December, we enter the season of Advent, as we prepare for the coming of our Lord as a baby. It is a busy time for so many and often we forget the real meaning of Advent. May we be aware of this and continue to thank our Lord for all He does for us.

News Of Friends

Our thoughts and prayers go out to all who are not well in body, mind or spirit and for those awaiting appointments, treatments and operations. We particularly name Harry and Joan B, Linda, Jean H, David, Ann, Peter, Jean W, Joan P, Jean H and we add other names that are on our hearts to these. Jesus said 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. Do not let your hearts be troubled. John Ch 14 v 27

Christmas Fayre in November

What a wonderful, joyful time we had with a church filled with Christmas goods, toys, gifts, cakes and Father Christmas's visit, raffles, tombolas and delicious refreshments. A good number of friends came from the community to share in the day and more than £1,200 was raised for the church funds. Many thanks to all those people who worked so hard to make the day so successful.

Annual Shoe Box Appeal for children overseas

This appeal was very well supported with 110 boxes being donated. A wonderful total! A huge thankyou to Janet and all her team for making this happen once again.

Wood Street Mission Christmas Appeal for children in Manchester and Salford

Again, thank you so much for all your donations to our annual appeal. Last year Wood Street Mission provided Christmas gifts to nearly 3,000 children. What an incredible effort from this charity which is 155years old.

Christmas at Church

On Dec 15th, we look forward to the Nativity play performed by our remarkable young people. Just to note, that some of the costumes used are well over 80years old!

On Dec 18th at 7pm – A Blue Christmas Service with carols. This is a joint service with Edge Lane and Clayton and St Andrews. All are welcome.

On Dec 22nd is our Carol Service with Rev. Paul Welch.

On Dec 25th our Christmas Day Service at 10am will be celebrated with our friends at Droylsden Methodist church, led by Rev. Paul Welch.

New Year at Church

On Jan 6th Epiphany and Covenant Sunday

We will hold our covenant service led by Rev. Paul Welch. This is a most important service held in the Methodist Church, when we are asked to renew our covenant relationship with God, with the powerful words starting with 'I am no longer my own but yours'

Birthdays

Wishing everyone born in December a very Happy Birthday. Wishing you many more years of good health, peace, happiness and prosperity.

Next Magazine

The January Magazine will be available both on the website and in hardcopy. Everyone is welcome to make contributions by email to

marian.claytonmethodist@yahoo.co.uk or to Elva by the 2nd of January 2025. Thank you.

The Season of Advent

Advent means 'coming'. It covers the 24 days of December, up to Christmas Day. It is a time to prepare ourselves for the Lord's coming.

In Mark Ch 1 v 3 it says, 'Prepare the way of the Lord. Make straight his paths'

Advent is a time of awakening, a time to begin anew, a time of watching, a time of hoping, a time of praising, a time of healing, a time of sharing, a time of rejoicing, a time of asking and so much more.

During this time, we light an advent candle at the beginning of the service for the 4 Sundays in the season. This year we are asked to light: -

The first candle for all who wait in darkness

The second candle to remind us of the witness of God's prophets in every age or because the voice of the prophet is drowned out by war and violence, we stand in solidarity with our siblings in Bethlehem and beyond, and we hold back from lighting this candle for another year.

The third candle is to give thanks for those who like John the Baptist, call us back to God.

The fourth candle is in solidarity with all those who like Mary, have answered God's call. The central fifth candle, is lit on Christmas Day to remind us that Christ is the light of the world.

What are your favourite Advent hymns?

Surely one must be 'O Come; O Come Immanuel. Also, 'Sing we the King who is coming to reign', 'Tell out my Soul, the greatness of the Lord' (based on Mary's song-the Magnificat), 'Hills of the north, rejoice', 'Come, thou long-expected Jesus', or more recent ones 'Advent candles tell the story', 'Colours of day dawn into the mind'

Christmas Eve or Holy Night - the night when Christ was born in a humble stable. Here is a thoughtful prayer from the prayer trust.

O Holy Night, O Blessed Night,
The night you dwelt among us,
The night Heaven came down to Earth

The night you shared our birth,
so humbly in a stable
that we might be born to eternal life

The night you shared our frailty
as a new-born babe,
that we might share your heaven.

Lord, I give you thanks for the blessing of this Night Divine, that I may share my life with you as you shared yours with mine. Amen.

Of course, the carols that comes to mind here are 'O Holy Night', along with 'Silent Night' (Both 'top ten' carols in the charts)

In the last verse of 'O Holy Night', two lines stand out. 'Truly He taught us to love one another, His law is love and His gospel is peace'

A Collect for Midnight on Dec 24th

God of light and hope, of stars and surprises:

Open our eyes to your glory and our hearts to your presence, that we may respond with joy to the angel song; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Did you know? Seasonal Musings

- Santa Claus was St. Nicholas, the Bishop of Myrna in Asia in the 4th century. He is the patron saint of children. His feast day is Dec 6th. An ancient Advent custom on the eve of Dec 6th was for children to leave lists of presents they would like on their window sill. (this has changed to sending lists to Santa in the post)
- The first Christmas card was made in 1843 by Sir Henry Cole, who founded the Victorian and Albert Museum in London. The card was sent to Mr John Horsley and was titled 'Brimming Cheer'
- The composer, Mendelssohn complained when one of his tunes was used for 'Hark! The Herald Angels Sing' (Written by Charles Wesley). The tune was originally part of a work to celebrate the 400th anniversary of printing! Mendelssohn thought the music was too 'soldier-like' for use as a carol.
- The first evidence for the celebration of Jesus's birth on Dec 25th is found in a Roman document dated AD 336.
- On Dec 25th 1914 (110 years ago), during the first world war, while the Germans and the allied armies faced each other in France, someone began singing 'Silent Night, Holy Night'. A hush fell over the battlefield and soldiers on both sides laid down their arms, climbed out of the trenches and met each other. They embraced, exchanged souvenirs and played a match of football. Then, on Dec 26th, they went back to being enemies.

A Poem by *Karen Stokes*

Memories

Christmas presents sealed and wrapped,
Excitement greets the dawn.
Squeals of joy and great delight
Ring through the Christmas morn.

Winter spice, aromas sweet
Permeate the air,
Friends and family gather,
But not everyone is there

The years race by relentlessly,
But memories lock down tight
Of ones we've said goodbye to
On our darkest tear-stained night

But the Morning Star of Christmas
Has light enough to throw
On all your secret sorrow,
More than you can know

The heart of God will hold you;
He knows just what to do,
He is the Christmas story
And today he's here for you

Poignant verses for many, with a reassurance that the Lord is always with us, whatever our circumstances

Lectionary reading for Dec 8th

One of the readings is from the Book of Baruch, not found in our revised Bibles. The books are part of the Apocrypha. When the King James Bible was first published in 1611, it contained both the Old and New Testament and the books of the Apocrypha, but later this was not included.

In Baruch Ch 5 v 1 it reads: -

Take off the garment of your sorrow and affliction, O Jerusalem and put on forever the beauty of the glory from God.

Maybe, this is a time to read more deeply into the 'Apocrypha'

Seasonal Puzzles

How many words of 4 letters or more can you make from

YULETIDE

No proper names or foreign words!

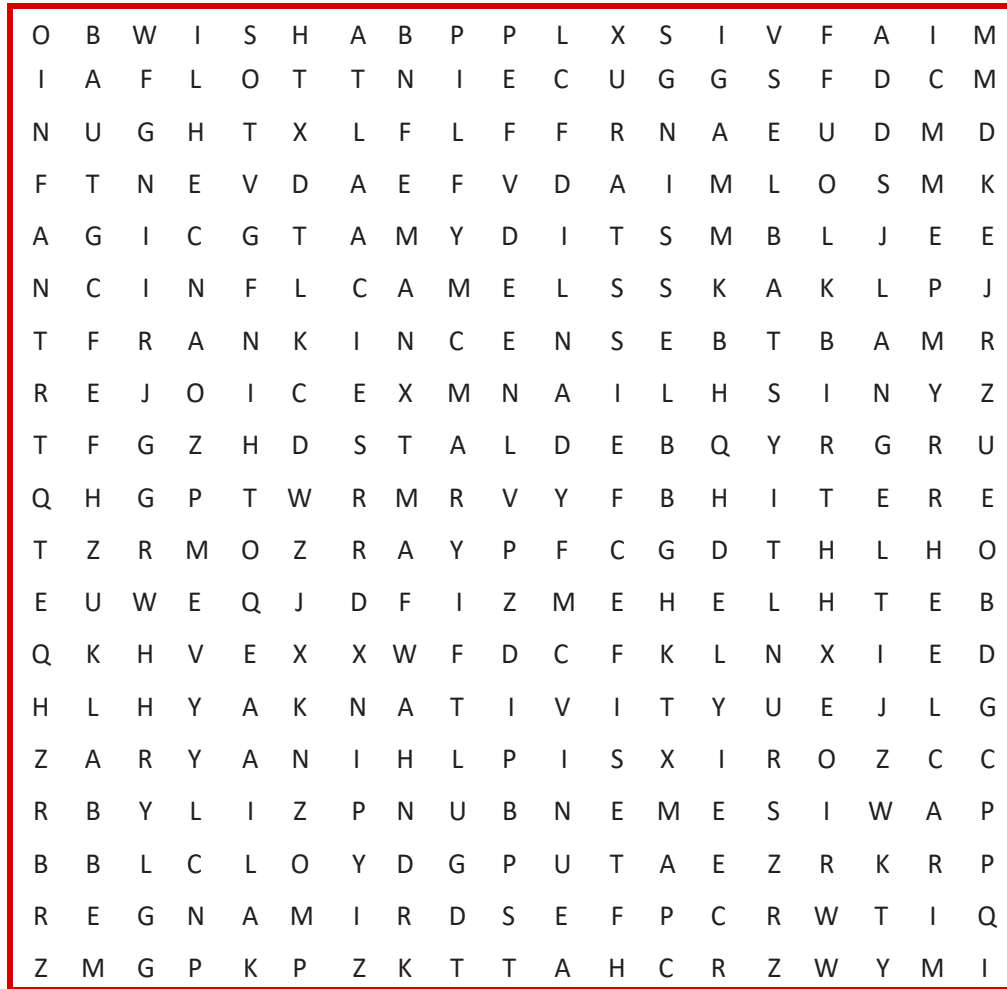
May the light of Christ shine in our hearts this Christmas.

**A Happy and Peaceful Christmas and New Year to all
our Readers**



Joy to the World

DIRECTIONS: Find and circle the vocabulary words in the grid. Look for them in all directions including backwards and diagonally.



ADVENT	INFANT	MYRRH
ANGEL	JESUS	NATIVITY
BETHLEHEM	JOSEPH	REJOICE
BIRTH	MAGI	STABLE
BLESSINGS	MANGER	STAR
CAMELS	MARY	THREE KINGS
FRANKINCENSE	MIRACLE	WISE MEN