

**TRINITY
METHODIST CHURCH
CODSALL**



**LINK
December 2017
January 2018**

TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH



Loving God



Following Jesus



Serving Others

Minister:

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MESSAGE FROM THE MANSE

Dear Friends

Happy Christmas!

The Christmas season seems to begin earlier and earlier, with brands jostling to make the most emotive and yet saccharine advertising. Christmas, it seems, is all about the message.

Whether it is Tesco's inviting us all to celebrate together – an advert crossing diversity and offering hope amongst division. Or Marks and Spencer's invoking Paddington Bear's innocence in preserving Christmas cheer, with a final sequence echoing the forever-story of 'It's a Wonderful Life.' Or John Lewis bringing light into darkness for monsters that live under the bed. Or the pun-tastic headlines caused by Greggs replacing Jesus with a half-eaten sausage roll ('O crumb all ye faithful' being my favourite).

Christmas, it seems, is all about the message. Hope. Family. Light. Community.

It is pertinent, therefore, that our Christmas celebrations this year are inviting us all to a message of hope in our very locality.

From Codsall to the Crib.

As we journey through the glitter and glamour of the Christmas season, with all the excitement of the expectations that Christmas brings – the invitation for each of us – and the invitation for us to invite others too – is to step aside from the pressure, and to take our own, slow, journey, to the crib. From wherever we are. With whomever accompanies us. Alongside those who bump us up the wrong way and those who inspire us to greatness.

From Codsall to the Crib.

I also think the power of the message that God has come to life in human form, walked in our shoes, and lived a life which shows the worst thing is never the last thing – is a message which inverts our publicity.

From the Crib to Codsall.

Into 2018, our challenge is to find the ways to speak hope, love, and grace into the contexts we find ourselves.

This is an invitation to noticing God at work in our village, streets, and homes. The opportunity to name hope in our midst, to see Jesus in our conversations, and to see angels transforming our reality.

This is an invitation to trusting that God is at work. Today. A message of 2000 years ago being still as relevant and powerful today as it was in the past, and will remain so until it is on earth as it is in heaven.

This is an invitation to sharing the most important thing with others. Offering them the opportunity to put their soul first – at least for an hour or so in one of our many services throughout the season.

This is an invitation to make a new year's resolution to pray for Codsall and God's ministry in this place. To invest in it, and to be courageous. Later in this Link, and through our service on 7th January, you will be introduced to some creative tools to help you pray for the church and our future together.

From Codsall to the Crib.

From the Crib to Codsall.

Because the Spirit is moving in this place, and I for one want to be a part of it. Whatever it is.

Yours in Christ

Joanne

Lord our God,
keep us your servants alert and watchful
as we wait the return of Christ your Son,
so that when he comes and knocks at the door
he may find us vigilant in prayer,
with songs of praise on our lips.
We ask this 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



PRAYERS

Please pray for those who are housebound or in residential care including:



Anne A; Charles A; Marjorie C; June C; Clara C; Daphne C;
Pat & John D; Frances E; Pat H; Christina H; Joyce H; Pat H;
Eileen J; Jean L; Rena M.

Please pray for those who are not well and their carers including:

Maureen B; Catherine who has been diagnosed with MS;
David E; Marjorie H; Susan J; Connie K; Olive L; Dorothy S; Liz T.

Please pray for those who have lost a loved one recently including:

Veronica & Alan on the loss of Veronica's mother who peacefully passed away.

Please pray for:

The continuing work of **The Well - Wolverhampton Food Bank** within the city and surrounding areas. There are a growing number of people who need their help and guidance. May God provide for all their wants and needs.

***God of all glory,
you brought the universe into existence,
and you raised up witnesses
to your greatness and love.***

We praise and adore you.

***Grant that by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit
we may worship and serve you,
and praise your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.***

Amen





CONGRATULATIONS
to
PAT AND KEN
as they celebrate their
Golden Wedding Anniversary
on 16th December

THANK YOU

Dear Friends

We would like to thank everyone for the prayers, love and support shown to us in the time leading up to the birth of Joseph. Also many thanks for the numerous cards and gifts sent since his arrival.

Ruth & Andrew G

Dear Sisters & Brothers in Christ

Many thanks for the beautiful flowers Marion Edge brought me from the church. I was so pleased to receive them, and they are a pleasure to look at.

May God bless you all with good health and happiness.

Frances E

Dear Friends

We could not let the occasion of the 50th Anniversary at Trinity go by without saying how privileged we both felt to have been there, joining in the celebrations. We and our family have so many happy memories of all the years we lived in Codsall and our involvement in a very special church. So much planning and preparation must have gone into the weekend for many months beforehand.

We would like to say 'Thank You' to everyone involved for their hard work in producing such a wonderful event. We are sure it was truly blessed by God and pray that the church will grow from strength to strength in His name.

Our love to all
Thelma & Dennis H

Dear Friends

It was lovely to be able to speak to so many of you when we were at Trinity for the 50th Anniversary weekend. We enjoyed both days very much and appreciated how much hard work had been done by so many people; thank you. We think of you all often but we have settled well into our new home and county. It is a joy to be able to share more family time with Richard, Elina and Mawgan. We also enjoy being so near to the coast for the walking.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish our many Trinity friends a blessed and joyful Christmas followed by a peaceful New Year.

With every blessing to you all,
Jean and Fred W

Dear Friends

Many, many thanks for all your articles, poems, jokes and especially your encouragement during the years I have been editor of The Link magazine. It has been a pleasure to compile and produce the magazine over the years, but it is now time to go forward into another realm within the church family. Please pray for me as I take on the role of a Church Steward and trust that God will guide me along the way.

Thank you again for all your support, and trust that you will support my successor in the same way.

God bless you all,
Chris R

LETTER OF THANKS TO ASSISTANT STEWARDS

The Church Stewards are assisted every Sunday through the work of the Assistant Stewards. We appreciate the help they give us, as we concentrate on assisting the Preacher, and we give them our grateful thanks.

We repeat our grateful thanks to these Assistant Stewards – long may they continue.

The Stewards

CHURCH CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Thank you to everyone who supported the Church Christmas Fayre on Saturday 21st November. To date a total of approx £1700 has been raised, and will be used on a selection of projects around the church. Thank you.

GIFT SERVICE

December 3rd is our Gift Day: an opportunity to bring gifts that we will then distribute to those for whom Christmas is difficult. It is a chance for us to offer of our creativity and wealth to bless other people in our community and beyond.

This year is a little different to our past experience. This year, we are partnering with two projects, with the following requests.

Wednesfield Christmas Hampers. Although the Church at Wednesfield has closed, the ministry to the community continues. At Christmas, this includes making Christmas Hampers for those who will struggle with the expectations of the festive season.

We are going to provide FAMILY FILM NIGHTS in these hampers. Please bring **NEW DVDs (cert 12 or under), Pre-popped popcorn (such as Butterkist or PoshCorn), and sachets and jars of hot chocolate.**

The Well. The Well are preparing PAMPER PACKS for parents, and chocolate boxes for children. Please bring **Pamper items for men and women (nice soaps, gels, scents) and selection boxes for children.**

This is such a great opportunity for sharing something of God's love for people who are struggling at Christmas to share joyfully, when they are

surrounded by debt, social problems, loss and fear. Please consider how generous you might be able to be, as we partner to change the lives of families at Christmas.

Joanne C-D and Valerie V-H



**THERE IS A NEW WEBSITE ADDRESS STARTING TO APPEAR ON
OUR PUBLICITY – www.christianity.org.uk**

The website is run by the Churches Together in England Agency, the Christian Enquiries Agency. It has three directions of work.

The first is a broad introduction to the Christian faith, responding to questions often asked and offering a way into knowing more, from a variety of Christian viewpoints.

The second enables people to write a prayer request. These prayers are sent to around 250 people every week for their prayers. This can be as anonymous as the writer needs them to be.

The third level invites people to write an email asking their questions. These emails are responded to by a trained group of evangelists, who offer a safe engagement with people's questions and who seek to build a relationship with people online.

The Archbishop of York has described this as 'possibly the easiest form of evangelism you will do.' There are many stories of people who have made a commitment of faith or discovered something new about Christianity. This is a website which changes people's minds, and also supports young people's RE homework!

Please check out the website, become comfortable with it, and feel free to tell others about it.

POSSIBLE FRESH EXPRESSION OF EMERGING CHURCH

Following the closure of Wednesfield Methodist Church and Community Centre in July this year, a group of ten people appointed by the circuit have been meeting to explore possibilities regarding its future use.

Two meetings have already taken place, with a third planned for 12 February 2018. The group want to know if there are others across the circuit who might be interested in being involved in something new - possibly some fresh expression of emerging church.

If you are looking for a new challenge in your journey of faith, and/or would like to know more, please have a word with:

Steve Jackson (01902883331) or Joanne Cox-Darling.

PRECIS OF SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 2017 CHURCH COUNCIL MEETINGS

Reports were received from the:

Families Worker,	Older Persons' Worker,	Property Group,
STATIC,	Pastoral Worker,	Safeguarding Officer,
Youth Club leader,	YPC leader,	Pastoral Co-ordinator

Discussions took place on:

1. The rent payable by "Little Treasures" from September 2018
2. A 'taster' day for anyone who may be interested in a worship leader's course
3. An 'Away Day' for a selected representative group of people in the church to discuss the future mission and development of Trinity
4. Membership and transfer strategy for the future
5. A donation for a new cloth for the communion table
6. The purchase of some new NIV Bibles and Access New Testaments from a small legacy gift
7. New additions to the Christmas calendar of a Memorial service, a stall at the Codsall Village Christmas Fayre, and Christmas Gift services on Sunday 3 December at a.m. services requesting gifts for Wednesfield Christmas Hampers, and Pamper packs and chocolate boxes for The Well.

Proposals were made and agreed on the following:

- Training on understanding dementia for those in the frontline roles at Trinity

- Possible further funding for the Older Person's Worker via Enid Lintern
- A year of scoping for a Youth and Families worker with SEND specialism
- The acceptance of the Accounts and Budget

* * *

Until one feels the spirit of Christmas, there is no Christmas. All else is outward display – so much tinsel and decorations. For,

*It isn't the holly, it isn't the snow,
It isn't the tree nor the firelight's glow,
It's the warmth that comes to the hearts of men
When the Christmas spirit returns again.*

AN ANGEL COMES DOWN TO EARTH

An eye witness account from New York City, on a cold day in December, some years ago. A little boy, about 10-years-old, was standing before a shoe store on the roadway, barefooted, peering through the window, and shivering with cold. A lady approached the young boy and said, 'My, but you're in such deep thought staring in that window!'

'I was asking God to give me a pair of shoes,' was the boy's reply.

The lady took him by the hand, went into the store, and asked the assistant to get half a dozen pairs of socks for the boy. She then asked if he could give her a basin of water and a towel. He quickly brought them to her.

She took the little fellow to the back part of the store and, removing her gloves, knelt down, washed his little feet, and dried them with the towel.

By this time, the assistant had returned with the socks. Placing a pair upon the boy's feet, she purchased a pair of shoes for him.

She tied up the remaining pairs of socks and gave them to him. She patted him on the head and said, 'No doubt, you will be more comfortable now.'

As she turned to go, the astonished kid caught her by the hand, and looking up into her face, with tears in his eyes, asked her.

'Are you God's wife?'

Many people think that it's wrong to call Christmas "Xmas". "It's like taking Christ away from Christmas!" they say. It's a reflection of the way Christmas has become separated from the birthday of Jesus Christ.

But let's think about it in another way. When I receive a letter with a row of Xs at the bottom, it tells me that the sender loves me very much.

When we see Christmas written as "Xmas" it can remind us that God loves us so much that he sent his own Son to tell us. So Xmas starts with a big kiss to remind us of God's great love. And of course an X is a cross and Jesus' love took him all the way from the stable to the cross.

Judith Merrell

'A Bundle of Laughs' compiled by J John & Mark Stibbe

LOST TIME

Harold Hill, President of Curtis Engine Company in Baltimore, Maryland, and a consultant in the US space programme, relates the following development.

Our astronauts and scientists were checking the position of the sun, moon, and planets out in space where they would be 100 years and 1000 years from now. We have to know this so we won't send a satellite up and have it bump into something later on during its orbits. We have to lay out the orbits in terms of the life of the satellite, and where the planets will be, so the whole thing will not bog down.

They ran the computer measurements back and forth over the centuries. The computer suddenly stopped and put out a red signal, which meant there was something wrong either with the information fed into it or with the results as compared to the standards. They called in the service department to check it out, and they found there is a day missing in space in elapsed time. They scratched their heads and tore their hair. There was no answer.

Finally, a Christian man on the team said, "You know, one time when I was in Sunday School they talked about the sun standing still." While they didn't believe him, they didn't have an answer either, so they said, "Show us." He got a Bible and went back to the book of Joshua where they found a pretty ridiculous statement for any one with 'common sense'. There they found the Lord saying to Joshua, "Do not fear them, for I have

delivered them into your hand; not a man of them shall stand before thee.” Joshua was concerned because he was surrounded by the enemy and if darkness fell they would overpower them. So Joshua asked the Lord to make the sun stand still. That’s right - “The sun stood still and the moon stayed – and hasted not to go down about a whole day!” The scientists and astronauts said, “There is the missing day!”

They checked the computers going back to the time it was written and found it was close but not close enough. The elapsed time that was missing back in Joshua’s day was 23 hours and 20 minutes – not a whole day. They read the Bible and there it was: ‘about (approximately) a full day’. These little words in the Bible are important, but they were still in trouble because if you cannot account for 40 minutes you’ll still be in trouble 1000 years from now. Forty minutes had to be found because it can be multiplied many time over in orbits.

As the Christian employee thought about it, he remembered somewhere in the Bible where it said the sun went BACKWARDS. The scientists told him he was out of his mind, but they got out the Book and read these words in 2 Kings: ‘Hezekiah, on his deathbed was visited by the prophet Isaiah who told him that he was not going to die. Hezekiah asked for a sign as proof. Isaiah said, ‘Shall the shadow go forward 10 degrees?’ Hezekiah said, ‘It is an easy thing for the shadow to go down 10 degrees; no, but let the shadow go backwards 10 degrees.’ Isaiah spoke to the Lord and the Lord brought the ten degrees BACKWARD!

Ten degrees is exactly 40 minutes! Twenty-three hours and 20 minutes in Joshua, plus 40 minutes in 2 Kings makes the missing day in the universe!

References: Joshua 10:8, 12, 13 and 2 Kings 20:9-11
(*‘A Bucket of Surprises’ by J John & Mark Stibbe*)

***God gave you a gift of 86,400 seconds today.
Have you used one to say ‘thank you?’
William Award***



THE MAGIC OF Christmas

Join Springfield House Care Home for their
Magic of Christmas celebrations
16 December 2017 18.00

Come and join us for our Christmas carol
themed celebrations!
Everyone welcome!

To find out more, please call the home on 01902 507359
Springfield Care Home
Oaken Drive, Codsall WV8 2EE

CHRISTMAS CAROLS & SONGS

Can you decipher the REAL titles of these exaggerated titles of very familiar Christmas tunes? **If you need help the answers are on the last page.**

- 1 From dark 'til dawn, soundless and sanctimonious.
- 2 Celestial messengers from splendid empires.
- 3 In a distant bovine diner.
- 4 Universal elation.
- 5 Ornament the enclosure with large sprigs of berry-bearing evergreen.
- 6 O miniature Nazarene village.
- 7 May Jehovah grant unto you hilarious males retirement.
- 8 Those of you who are true, come here!
- 9 Are you detecting the same aural sensations as I am?
- 10 The diminutive male less than adult age who plays a percussion instrument.
- 11 Primary Yuletide.
- 12 Heavenly cherubs announcing in song – listen!

WHO DO YOU BLAME FOR CHRISTMAS?

A woman was out Christmas shopping with her two children. After many hours looking at row upon row of toys and everything else imaginable, and after hours of hearing both her children asking for everything they saw on those many shelves, she finally made it to the lift with the two of them.

She was feeling what so many of us feel in the run up to Christmas – overwhelming pressure to go to every party, every house-warming, taste all the holiday food and treats, get that perfect gift for every single person on the shopping list, and the pressure of making sure that no one is forgotten on the card list.

Finally the lift doors opened and there was already a crowd inside. She pushed her way into the lift and dragged the two children in with her and all her bags and stuff. When the doors closed she couldn't take it any more and said loud and clear "Whoever started this whole Christmas thing should be found, strung up and shot!"

From the back of the lift everyone heard a quiet, calm voice respond, "Don't worry, we've already crucified him." For the rest of the trip down the lift was so quiet you could have heard a pin drop.

Don't forget this year to keep the "One who started this whole Christmas thing" in your every thought, deed, purchase and word.

CHRISTMAS WREATHS

A wreath with holly, red berries and other decoration began from at least the 17th century.

Holly, with its sharp pointed leaves, symbolised the thorns of Christ's crown-of-thorns.

Red berries symbolised the drops of Christ's blood.

A wreath at Christmas signified a home that celebrated the birth of Christ.

Both these items from LINK newsletter of Diocese of Lichfield (2006) and were included in the first Christmas Link that I edited. Chris



CODSALL ARTS FESTIVAL

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Nick van Bloss: Wednesday 14th March 2018 at Codsall High School
7:30pm

Ex Cathedra: Thursday 22nd March 2018 at St Nicholas' Church - 7:30pm

PLAYS AND PARLANCE

Something for everyone who loves drama and interesting talks is the promise of Codsall Community Arts Festival in March 2018.

The Screwtape Letters - by CS Lewis

Thursday 15th March 7.30pm Trinity Methodist Church

Old Herbaceous - Peter Macqueen

Monday 12th March 7.30pm Codsall Community High School

General Sir Mike Jackson

Tuesday 13th March 7.30pm Codsall Community High School

A Passionate Life -with Robert Powell and Liza Goddard.

Sunday 18th March 2.30pm Codsall Community High School

The Grand Tour - with Gareth Williams, Curator to the Weston Park Foundation - Monday 19th March 7.30 Codsall Community High School

Oxford Shakespeare Company

Tuesday 20th March 7.30pm Codsall Community High School

Codsall Dramatic Society's - The Thrill of Love. (Date to be announced)

www.codsallartsfestival.org.uk

Find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/CodsallArts

Contact The Arts Festival on: 07852 200421

Registered Charity 1127064



Wolverhampton Chamber Choir

**Wednesday 13th December 2017
at 7.30pm**

St Christopher's Church, Wolverhampton Rd, Codsall WV8 1PF

CHRISTMAS CRACKER!

Come and join in our Christmas Charity Concert
in aid of THE HAVEN
supporting women and dependant children who are vulnerable to
domestic violence, homelessness and abuse.

Director of Music: Geoffrey Weaver

Audience participation

Tickets: £9 (Under 18s free)
Available: Sue and Steve Fearnley
Margaret Robson

www.wolverhamptonchamberchoir.org.uk

FLOWER ROTA

Flowers for December & January have been donated by the following people:



December

Audrey E John & Pat D
Connie K Christmas Flowers

January

Olive L & Jeanne W
Veronica & Alan C Marie & Richard G
Pearl & Peter M

February

Ann A Janet & Peter S
Reubina & John L Mary S

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Meeting on Mondays at 2pm for 2.15pm start.

Dec	4	Members Day & Raffle	
	11	Christmas Meal	
	18	Rev Joanne Cox-Darling	Carol Service
Jan	1	No Meeting: New Year's Day	
	8	No Meeting	
	15	No Meeting	
	22	Rev Joanne Cox-Darling	
	29	Susan O'Mahoney	My Craft-making
Feb	5	Members' Day and Raffle	
	12	Bernard Heap:	"Do you remember the 50s?"
	19	Rev Joanne Cox-Darling	
	26	Joint Meeting with Circuit MWiB	

TUESDAY CLUB

Dec	12	Christmas Party at the Beacon Centre	
Jan	9	Pearl & Peter Mayhew	Memories of Coastal Views
	23	Helen Bratt-Wyton	The influence of William Morris at Wightwick Manor
Feb	6	Practice night	
	20	Practice night	

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Dec	5	Neil Maddox	Supermarket Management
	12	Christmas Party at the Beacon Centre	
Jan	16	Philip Court	
	30	Andy Caddick	First Responders First
Feb	13	Choir Practice	
	27	Choir Practice	

LIFEGROUPS

All meetings begin at 7.30pm at various venues.

Dec	6	Moses
Jan	10	TBC
Jan	24	TBC

For further information email codsallmethodist@gmail.com

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

December

Sun	3	1st Sunday in Advent & Gift Services Rev Joanne Cox-Darling Rev Joanne Cox-Darling Circuit service at Fallings Park	9.30am 11.00am 6.00pm
Sun	10	No Mosaic service Rev Joanne Cox-Darling AAW/Nativity Wear your Christmas Sweaters Rev Joanne Cox-Darling Holy Communion	11.00am 6.00pm
Sun	17	Rev Joanne Cox-Darling Carol Service Mr A Christie Rev Joanne Cox-Darling Carol Service	9.30am 11.00am 6.15pm
Sun	24	No Mosaic service Local Arrangement Rev Joanne Cox-Darling Holy Communion	11.00am 11.30pm
Mon	25	Christmas Morning Worship Rev Joanne Cox-Darling	10.30am
Sun	31	Rev Teddy Siwila	11.00am
January			
Sun	7	Rev Joanne Cox-Darling HC/Covenant Rev Joanne Cox-Darling HC/Covenant Local Arrangement	9.30am 11.00am 6.00pm
Sun	14	Local Arrangement Mr Richard French Rev Joanne Cox-Darling Holy Communion	9.30am 11.00am 6.00pm
Sun	21	Rev Joanne Cox-Darling Dr Janet Anderson Mr Edward Newton	9.30am 11.00am 6.00pm
Sun	28	Rev Joanne Cox-Darling Rev Joanne Cox-Darling Mrs Brenda Shuttleworth	9.30am 11.00am 6.00pm
Mon	29	Church Council Meeting	7.30pm

All items for the next edition should be given to Helen Share or emailed to the church office, with dates to end of April 2018. Telephone 01902 847490, email codsallmethodist@gmail.com

Articles accepted by email, or clearly written/typed. If your article has been copied from another source please include information about where the article has come from.

CHRISTMAS QUIZ

Answers:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1 Silent Night; | 2 Angels We Have Heard on High; |
| 3 Away in a Manger; | 4 Joy to the World; |
| 5 Deck the Halls with boughs of holly; | |
| 6 O Little Town of Bethlehem; | 7 God Rest You Merry Gentlemen; |
| 8 O Come, All Ye faithful; | 9 Do You Hear What I Hear? |
| 10 Little Drummer Boy; | 11 The First Noel; |
| 12 Hark, the Herald Angels Sing. | |

