

*'Sharing the love of Jesus every day'*



# *Connections*

*The church magazine for Baginton Road URC*



**December 2025 / January 2026**

*Incorporating Warwick Road URC and West Orchard URC*

**Baginton Road  
Coventry  
CV3 6FP**



December 2025  
& January 2026

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### Connections - February 2026 issue deadline

News, articles and other items to be included in the February 2026 issue of *Connections* should be sent by email to the editor Claire Booth (clairehbooth@hotmail.com) no later than **Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026**.

Items should ideally be no more than 1 page in length (about 450 words) and definitely no longer than 2 pages.

*Connections* is published in digital format ten times a year and emailed to subscribers. You are also able to view it on the church website. If you want it emailed to you, please contact Kevin Bodsworth at the Church Office: office@bagintonroadurc.org.uk.

Thanks, *Claire*

## Dear Friends



It seems strange writing a Christmas message at the beginning of November when it is still warm and the trees in Norfolk still have an autumnal feel. We have used our open fire but the heating remains firmly off (although it might be on by the time you read this!). I often wonder what the weather was like at that first Christmas: was it a picture postcard snowy day, or perhaps there was a cold wind seeping in through the gaps in the stable wall. The sun could have been shining and its rays kept baby Jesus warm.

Do you ever think about the Christmas carols and how they do not really reflect the true picture of the Nativity?

- “Silent night, All is calm all is bright”: I am not sure Mary would have given birth in silence! There must have been a lot of noise with all the visitors like the shepherds.
- Away in a manger – “no crying he makes”: if Jesus was born as a human baby, he was normal so he would have cried when he was hungry.
- “While Shepherds watched their flocks”: they did not stay very long watching as they went off to Bethlehem to see the baby.

Our focus this Christmas is on the shepherds and their sheep, and as part of the preparation I went and interviewed a modern-day shepherd. I will be sharing some clips from the interview during the Christmas services and on our Facebook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/bagintonroadurc>).

The role of a shepherd is a theme that runs throughout the Bible: Abel was the first shepherd (Gen 4:2), Rachel was a female shepherd (Gen 29:6) and David (1 Sam 16) started as a shepherd but became Israel’s king. It was David who wrote “The Lord is my Shepherd” (Psalm 23) and we see this link between the early role and the heavenly one. It is not surprising that we find shepherds at the first nativity scene, having been directed there by the angelic host (Luke 2).

I was reflecting on the words of the angels “today in the town of David a saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord” (2:11). The message was not that “a baby has been born to Mary and Joseph, go and pay your respects”. It was more personal than that – the baby would impact on their lives as he was no ‘ordinary’ baby but the saviour of the world. As Karl Barth (2010, p.23) preached: “these words *you – this day – a saviour* contains the whole Christmas story” and suggests that just as this initial good news was delivered to “those certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay”, is also delivered to us today. The same saviour that was born to them, is born to us.

However, the shepherds didn't just turn up for the family photos, to be role models for future nativity plays (who hasn't played a shepherd at school?!), they had an important job. In the time before social media and even the printing press, word of mouth was used. We read "when they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them." (Luke 2:17-18). They did have an amazing story, so amazing it could be described as unbelievable.

Karl Barth (1959, p.59) says the shepherds had two things to tell. The first was a "very natural and ordinary fact": they had seen a new-born baby. The second was "the rather peculiar and supernatural fact" that the news about this new-born baby was delivered by an angel. It was probably the latter that interested the people most, not an everyday occurrence.

Unlike us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, this event was not something they read about or had been taught at school, they were there – they saw the baby Jesus, they met Mary and Joseph and heard about the miraculous birth of the son of God. They were excited, they wanted to tell everyone about Jesus.

How do we respond over two thousand years later? Are we like the shepherds excited at this birth or perhaps we have been complacent with the story? However, the story hasn't changed – a saviour was born for us, a baby that when he grew up would give his life so that we might have our broken relationship with God restored. It has been said that there is a link between the crib and the cross – both were made of wood, Jesus began life in a wooden crib and ended life on a wooden cross as he died emphasising love for the world. Karl Barth (1959, p.13) highlights the importance of Good Friday and Christmas when he wrote that "except we see the cross of Golgotha, we cannot hear the gospel at the crib of Bethlehem".

I pray we are excited this Christmas to share the good news of a "saviour born to you". Linda, Prinny, Zena and I wish you all a Merry Christmas.

*Simon*

#### Bibliography

- Barth, K. (1959). *Christmas* (B. Citron, trans.), Oliver and Boyd.
- Barth, K. (2010). *Deliverance to the Captives*. Wipf & Stock.

### **Home Group**

There is a Home Group held on a Monday evening once a fortnight at 7.15pm in one of our homes. If you are looking for a warm, friendly group to explore the Bible more, give us a try. We are looking at the book of Isaiah after Christmas. Speak to Sarah Jarrad or Marilyn Saunders.

## Message From Our Minister Debbie

Dear Friends



At Christmas we celebrate God's greatest gift. God comes amongst us as one of us in Jesus Christ. The Christ-child of Bethlehem has come to save us from our sins and to bring us back to God. The work that Jesus Christ completed in his glorious person "Emmanuel, God with us," made a full approval to the claims of law and justice on behalf of all those who shall eventually enter their Father's House.

The words in the carol 'Tidings of Comfort and Joy' tell us that God is with us to comfort us in our sorrows and to bring joy to the world. Is there anything in this world compared to entering a New Year on the heart of the unsearchable love of Jesus Christ?! So, may we find in our joys and in our sorrows the fullness of God's blessing this year and every New Year.

*"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."* [Romans 8:38-39]

God bless  
*Debbie*



### Appreciation

We would like to thank you all for your lovely cards, kind wishes of sympathy and support on the passing of John Gale.

We also would like to thank you for your kind donations to British Heart Foundation, whereby we have managed to raise £180 plus £40 via direct donations.

Thank you to everyone involved in helping to make the day one that John would be very proud of.

Kind regards  
*Audrey and family*

We would like to thank you all for your prayers, kind thoughts and flowers following the illness and sad passing of Wyn.

*Winston & family*

## Notes from Elders' Meetings - November 2025



- Eight people from BRURC have completed the Advanced Level Safeguarding training. Donna Gordon, Synod Safeguarding lead, complimented BRURC on its provision for safeguarding and efficient policies. Email address for any safeguarding concerns is now [safeguarding@bagintonroadurc.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@bagintonroadurc.org.uk).
- Assistant Church Secretary also has a designated email address [assistantsecretary@bagintonroadurc.org.uk](mailto:assistantsecretary@bagintonroadurc.org.uk).
- The Elders will be gathering for an Away Day at the Warwick Road Centre on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2026.
- Revd Debbie, Simon, and Sue D met with the Moderator earlier this month to agree a joint progressive way forward. The Elders from all five URC churches in Coventry will meet for discussion at Foleshill Road URC on 3<sup>rd</sup> January.
- There will be an opportunity for members from the five churches to engage in joint Bible study groups and follow the Alpha course.
- The five Pulpit Supply secretaries will meet to co-ordinate plans on 27<sup>th</sup> November.
- Simon has been authorised to preside at Holy Communion once he has undergone training. This means we can now call on Debbie, Simon and other ordained and retired Ministers in the area to lead Holy Communion. In the first instance, Debbie will lead here at BR and Simon will cover any services that Debbie is unable to do.
- Revd Debbie, Simon and Sue will travel to Derbyshire on 24<sup>th</sup> November to take part in the course 'Leading Your Church into Growth'.
- We discussed arrangements for Christmas here at BRURC.
- Simon gave us an update on plans for worship and activities, during December. As part of the plans, members will be asked to bring specific items for the foodbank on 14<sup>th</sup> December and 4<sup>th</sup> January; the Elders thought this was a clever idea and we will have a monthly focus for items to donate.
- Reports from groups and committees were discussed.
- Invitation has been extended to the Elders to attend Sammy's ordination as pastor to the Belonging Church. Agreed to send a card on behalf of our church.
- Two requests have been received via the Comments Box asking if the Choir could face the congregation when singing the hymns during the service, this would help to lead with the less familiar ones. Secondly, could they refrain from blocking the Minister when they are being introduced at the start of the service. This has been implemented as of 16<sup>th</sup> November; the Choir also suggested that when they sing a blessing the Minister will be invited to move to the front row.

*Pauline Luckett, Assistant Secretary*



## Special Cause for November, December and January

After a very successful three months of the Special Cause LOOK, during which over £350 was generously given, we are now asking for contributions for a charity suggested by Sue Matthews – National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society (NRAS).



NRAS is the only patient-led charity in the UK that focuses specifically on rheumatoid arthritis (RA) and juvenile idiopathic arthritis. (JIA)

NRAS provides:

- Information via websites, booklets, webinars and educational programmes.
- Support via a helpline, peer to peer support, family days, groups, social media and online communities.
- Advocacy and campaigning.
- Support for rheumatology health professionals and clinicians.

RA can strike at any age over 16 years old and has a devastating impact not just on physical health but also on mental health, work and family life.

JIA affects 1 in 1,000 children in the UK and is diagnosed when the child is under 16.

Until a cure is found for these conditions, people affected will need good quality support, information and advocacy on their behalf to ensure appropriate treatment.

Please give generously to support the work of this very worthwhile charity. The collection box is on the table near the main church doors. Thank you

*Pam & John Dawson*



### **Women's Prayer Breakfast**

Next dates: 17<sup>th</sup> January, 7<sup>th</sup> February, 14<sup>th</sup> March, 11<sup>th</sup> April.

A warm welcome to all women from our Church, Belonging Church and any friends from another or no Church at all. We meet once a month at 8.30am to set up and start with a bring and share breakfast – always delicious and more than enough.

It is an opportunity to offer each other encouragement and a listening ear as we share good and tough times, laughter and maybe tears.

We spend about 20 minutes with an activity to nurture our spirit and soul, always ending in prayer for concerns shared. There is no obligation to speak, everything we share is confidential to those present. Not everyone comes every time, just come when you can. We promise it is always worth getting up for.

*Kathy Jackson*

## World Scout Jamboree 2027



**POLAND 2027**

26th World Scout Jamboree  
26e Jamboree Scout Mondial™

The World Scout Jamboree (WSJ) is a global gathering of Scouts and Guides from every corner of the world. It's a chance for young people and adult volunteers to build international friendships, discover new cultures, and take part in an inspiring programme of activities in a safe, inclusive, and sustainable environment.

The first Jamboree took place in Olympia, London, in 1920. Since then, it has been held roughly every four years in a different country, bringing together 14 - 17-year-olds to share experiences, learn about the world, and try new adventures. In 2027, it takes place in northern Poland from July 30<sup>th</sup> to August 8<sup>th</sup>.

There are four Scouts from the 11<sup>th</sup> Coventry (West Orchard) who have been selected to go to the 26<sup>th</sup> World Scout Jamboree: Catherine, Kaydie-Ann, Meredith and William, who have been a part of Scouting and Guiding at our church for approximately 24 years between them.

Along with approximately 4,500 Scouts from the UK, there are expected to be 40,000 Scouts and Guides attending the event at Wyspa Sobieszewska in Gdansk on the Baltic coast, which is the largest outdoor event of its kind in the world today.

The UK contingent travelling to the Jamboree is made up of Scouts and Guides, Unit Leaders, the International Service Team (IST), and the Contingent Leadership and Support Team; together, they represent the UK on the world stage.

Scouts from Baginton Road Church have in the past travelled to Jamborees around the world, going to Seoul, South Korea in 2023, West Virginia in the USA in 2019, Kirarahama, Japan in 2015 and Kristianstad, Sweden in 2011. David, William's father, went as a Scout to Sattahip, Thailand in 2003, with fond memories of celebrating Christmas day on the beach!

Having been through a rigorous selection day, our four Scouts now have to raise £3,950 each to pay for their place. Part of this amount goes to other Scouts from other less well-off countries to allow them the opportunity to travel to a Jamboree.

There are 18 Scouts chosen from Coventry and 18 Scouts from Solihull who, together with four adult leaders, making a unit of 40 people that will share this experience. Over the next 18 months they will join together over a number of weekends to get to know each other, learn new skills and languages, fund raise and learn about the part of the world they will be visiting.

Fun facts: Indonesia is the country with the greatest number of Scouts – 25 million! Five countries do not have Scouting: Andorra, Cuba, China, Laos and North Korea.

*Crawford Dow, Group Lead Volunteer*



## Social Committee News



A big thank you to all who supported the Soup Lunch last month. We thank all who made the delicious soups, helped set up and clear away. It was a very busy lunchtime with lots of diners, so many attending that at times we had to ask people to wait as all seats were taken.

We raised a grand total of £484 for Christian Aid, a superb amount. Thank you for your help and support.

Please let us know if you have any ideas for further social events and activities.

*Social Committee*

## Commitment For Life 2025

Commitment  
for Life

Life-giving Faith | Defiant Hope | Generous Love

'Hope in crisis' was Commitment for Life's strapline in 2025. This year, as I was preparing and ordering materials, these three words came to dominate my personal life when, quite suddenly, I became seriously ill. How would I get everything done before and after my operation?

But I need never have worried as the Baginton Road community took up the challenge on my behalf. Sue M assisted with the paperwork, the Elders collected in the envelopes each week, Simon preached an encouraging sermon, Sue M and her grandson dismantled the wee display and brought it home to me while Margaret, our gallant Treasurer, took care of the 'counting' and calculated the Gift Aid.

That dealt with the 'Crisis'; and the 'Hope'? I had hoped and prayed so hard that the congregation would support the appeal for Zimbabwe, despite numerous competing and worthy causes, but I never dreamt that your donations would bring an avalanche of hope!

I blinked away a tear as I checked Margaret's total. The MOST we have ever raised: £1,174 from envelopes, making £1,468 with Gift Aid!

I felt so blessed to belong to such a generous, caring community and I thank you all from the bottom of my heart. Through our support, the sugar, beans, maize meal and cooking oil purchased via vouchers can continue, for as Phelele, a 77-year old grandmother, recounted: "It is a lifeline for people like us".

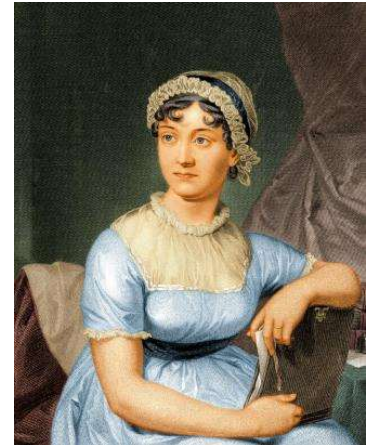
God bless you everyone.

*Mary G.*

## Jane Austen – still loved 250 years later

It was 250 years ago, on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1775, that novelist Jane Austen (*Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park*, *Emma*, *Northanger Abbey*, *Persuasion*) was born. Over 30 million copies of her books have since been sold – 7,000 in her lifetime.

She was the second daughter and seventh child of the Revd George Austen, rector of the village of Steventon in Hampshire. Two of her brothers became clergymen, two were Admirals in the Royal Navy and the other inherited substantial estates in Kent and Hampshire from a distant cousin. Neither Jane nor her sister Cassandra, with whom she was very close, ever married.



Jane had a sincere Christian faith which deepened as she got older and is reflected in her novels. She had sympathy with hands-on evangelicalism and a desire to abolish the slave trade, which she refers to particularly in *Mansfield Park*.

She lived at Steventon for 25 years and then moved with her parents and sister to Bath, enjoying holidays in the West Country. Her father died in 1805, and they moved to Southampton and then Chawton in Hampshire, less than 20 miles from Steventon, where they had a cottage on one of her brother Edward's estates – now a Jane Austen museum. This cottage was where she devoted herself to writing, revising her first three novels and composing another three.

But it was here too that she fell ill and died in 1817 – probably from Addison's Disease. She had been published only anonymously in her lifetime, and her style was not immediately appreciated, though its comments on the world of the landed gentry, to which she belonged, quickly became popular – as did her wit, irony and her realistic plots.

She is now more popular than ever, with followers known as Janeites and a flourishing Jane Austen Society with worldwide membership, plus numerous film and TV adaptations of her work.

There are some gaps in her private life, mainly because her sister Cassandra destroyed most of her letters after Jane's death. At the age of 20 she seems to have fallen for Thomas Lefroy, a neighbour who later became Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, but the relationship never developed. The epitaph by her brother James on her tomb in Winchester Cathedral praises the "extraordinary endowments of her mind".

*Tim Lenton, Parish Pump*

## NEWS IN BRIEF FROM AROUND THE UK AND BEYOND

Throughout the UK, several churches held a Blessing of the Pets service on the weekend of the anniversary of St Francis of Assisi in October. One church had to issue tickets to prevent overcrowding as numbers of attendees had grown over the years, resulting in humans joining the congregation.

The Ministry of Justice is examining easier marriage licensing that would mean members of Sikh, Buddhist, Jewish, Muslim and Hindu faiths could legally marry in their place of worship and not have to have two services, one legal and the other religious; it would also allow couples to marry on beaches or heritage sites. However, family law experts cautioned about sham weddings for tax reasons or forced marriages for migration purposes. This reform could support 1,800 more businesses, 12,000 more jobs and generate £535m for HM Treasury.

Customs are changing: competitors this year in the World Conker Championship had to have their conkers inspected by a metal detector and a magnet to ensure fair play.

A survey from the National Churches Trust found that one in 20 churches will definitely or probably have to shut by 2030, including one in 14 rural churches. Over 20,000 churches are listed for their historical and architectural importance. The Church of England has over £11bn of assets.



The new wall painting at St Mary Magdalen, Wyken, was blessed by the former Archbishop of Canterbury Lord (Rowan) Williams on 6<sup>th</sup> October. Commissioned 90 years after consecration of the church, this icon reminds us of life before the Reformation when churches were filled with wall paintings. It joins other churches in Coventry with wall paintings, such as Holy Trinity Church and the restored Charterhouse on London Road.

The Church of England website notes that bats are “part of God’s creation” and they (the bats) agree by occupying at least half of the churches in England. Often 12 of the 18 native species are to be observed in residence.

In Bucharest, Romania, a new cathedral has been opened following 15 years of construction, costing £264m. This building with its tall gilded dome 127 metres high has been built in the area containing the Ministry of Defence and the House of the People (Parliament). It can hold 5,000 worshippers with space on the esplanade for 23,000. Inside is the world’s largest iconostasis (a screen with icons that separates the nave from the sanctuary), the largest free-swinging church bell and the largest collection of church mosaics, plus concert halls and nuclear shelters. The Romanian Orthodox Church has 19 million followers.

*Barry Stelfox*

## Behind the Scenes at Baginton Road URC

Someone recently remarked that we have several groups and committees here at Baginton Road, but they had no idea who they were or what they did, so we are featuring two committees each month and explain who they are and what they do. This month we look at Social Committee and Pastoral Care.

**Social Committee:** Meetings as required to plan events.

- Members: Pam D, Sarah J, Liz K, Pauline L, Chris M.
- Responsibilities: to organise social events and activities for church funds, non-fundraising purposes, and charities.
- Duties: to organise and encourage support for social and fundraising events during the year, to promote fellowship and friendship among as wide a cross-section of the congregation as possible. These events may include indoor as well as outdoor gatherings and outings. To provide any advice on catering to other church organisations who are holding events in the church or halls. To offer support, when possible, with tea and coffee at funeral wakes (this will depend on availability of the Committee and other church members to assist). To lead on planning for Holiday from Home.



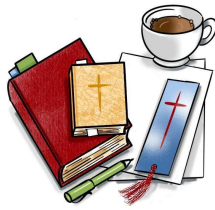
**Pastoral Care:** Meetings in the process of being revised.

- Members: Mary G, Sarah J, Ruth M, Joan R, Linda W, Simon W.
- Responsibilities: to implement the pastoral care within the church.
- Duties: to re-allocate Elders contact lists after Annual Elders Election for approval by Elders. Oversee who requires a home or hospital visit and apportion visitors, as necessary. To have an overview of pastoral needs and be aware if support is already offered by an Elder or social group, to arrange other support if needed. Allocate those who wish to be involved in the Prayer Chain to one of the 'branches', ensure it is working and updated, as necessary. To identify and implement training for pastoral care 'Care Group' and wider team of visitors. Undertake visits, as necessary. Offer prayer if requested. Identify those who may wish for home Communion and notify minister. Consideration for the housebound.
- It is the right of every individual in the church family to decide if and with whom their personal information is shared and in what way.
- The Group recognises that everything discussed at its meetings is confidential and should not be repeated outside of the group without permission being sought first from the person or people involved. Permission should also be sought before prayer requests are sent down the Prayer Chain or written in the Prayer Book.

If you are interested and feel you would like to join any of our committees, please speak to Sue D or Pauline L.

*Pauline Luckett, Assistant Secretary*

## Theological Reflections - Mary and Joseph 'blessed by the bot?'



Mary and Joseph are key figures in the Christmas story, but did they just happen to be in the right place at the right time (or they may have thought wrong place) or were they chosen specifically for the task? Did God use an algorithm, point a finger 'it is you', or perhaps it was more like the pre-computer Christmas party game of 'pin the tail on the donkey'?

BBtA ('Blessed by the algorithm') could apply to the role you performed in the Christmas school nativity. According to an article in *The Daily Mail* based on a Virgin Media survey in 2019, those who play an ox have the highest earning potential, while Mary has the most friends on Facebook. Unfortunately, playing the lamb, although very important in the nativity, does not provide much future financial provision or friendship.<sup>1</sup>

Dr Beth Singler's study of the phrase 'BBtA'<sup>2</sup> used in Tweets, demonstrates how people use this phrase to share how fortunate they were (empty seats next to them on a plane) or on occasions not BBtA when things have not worked out. Perhaps a few years ago we would have just described it as good or bad luck, answered prayer or God looking out for us.

Singer highlights a tweet where the expression BBtA was used in the 'real world.'



According to Singer: "It refers to an individual feeling blessed while working in a gig economy job which is reliant on algorithmic decision-making systems".

The question is: did God use an algorithm in selecting Mary and Joseph to be the human parents for his son Jesus? Derek Knuth defines an algorithm as 'a finite set of rules which gives a sequence of operations for solving a specific type of problem'.<sup>3</sup> We encounter algorithms frequently in our daily lives, whether applying for credit, booking seats on a plane or theatre, or passing surveillance cameras.



If we follow Knuth's definition, then I would suggest God did use a type of algorithm for selecting Mary and Joseph, because they had to fit certain criteria to be Jesus' parents. The first criterion was they had to be Jewish, as God promised Abraham that it was through his offspring the world would be blessed (Gen 22:18). It is suggested that about 0.2% of the World's current population is Jewish, so this rule excludes 99.8% of people from being chosen. The percentage might have been slightly higher in the 1<sup>st</sup> century as the world's population would have been less.



Photo by Gareth Harper on Unsplash

The population of Israel in the 1<sup>st</sup> century has been estimated to be between 500,000 to 2,500,00; the 1931 census recorded the population of the four districts of Nazareth as 140,422 or 151 people to the square mile,<sup>4</sup> although it would have been considerably less in the 1<sup>st</sup> century.

In Genesis 3, God tells Eve and the serpent (representing the devil) that he will cause 'hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring ...' and the prophecy is that the Saviour will be born of a woman (Is 7:14) eliminating around 50% of the population. There are further rules to be considered: not only would the Saviour be Jewish, but he would come from the tribe of Judah (Gen 49:10, Num 24:17, 2 Sam 7:12-13, Micah 5:2). In the unlikely event that all the tribes had the same number of females, around 8% would meet these criteria, although in scripture we are not informed which tribe Mary came from. Her cousin Elizabeth was from the priestly tribe (Luke 1:5) and Joseph is from the tribe of Judah (Luke 3, Matthew 1), therefore perhaps, the pool of females available to God is higher. It would have further been reduced by the need for a female of teenage years.



Photo by Megan Watson on Unsplash

The prophet Micah states the Saviour would be born in Bethlehem and further algorithms were needed to ensure this happened, otherwise scripture would not have been fulfilled and the Magi might not have found Jesus to bring the gifts and worship him (Matt 2).

There had to be a census at least eight months after the Angel visits Mary and people had to go to their own town to register. Joseph (conveniently) ends up in Bethlehem and the baby is born and we are all 'blessed by the algorithm'.

It could be argued I have applied 21<sup>st</sup> century principles and terminology to a 1<sup>st</sup> century event; however, it demonstrates that God chose the parents of his son carefully and in line with his promises in scripture. The good news of Christmas is that, although the first Christmas was only available to a few chosen individuals, it is



because of that first Christmas we can now all share in the love of God and experience a new relationship with him.

As Faith and Paul Syrstad's poem reminds us, Jesus is not 'just' a baby: *'He's just a baby, yet when He's laid in His grave, He will rise three days later, victorious to save. He's just a baby, when we look in His festive cot, But the truth is He's not just a baby, He is the Almighty Son of God.'* <sup>5</sup>

*Simon*

Notes:

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7666031/Adults-starred-OX-school-nativity-revealed-highest-earners-today.html>
2. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00146-020-00968-2>
3. Donald Knuth, *The Art of Programming: Volume 1: Fundamental Algorithms* (Addison-Wesley, 1973)
4. (1947): 425–436
5. For the full poem see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0jRILcUezmM>



## **Warwick Road Centre and Café - December Update**

It is a pleasure to remind folk about the always popular Christmas Meals in Open Doors Café. There are two dedicated days this year: Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> December and Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December. Orders are still being taken for Friday 12<sup>th</sup>, but Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> is now fully subscribed. Clare and her team of staff and volunteers work very hard to ensure customers enjoy the festive meal.

The annual Christmas Carols in the Courtyard takes place on the morning of Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> December. time to be finalised. Please call the office (024 7622 0299) if you want to come along and sing or simply support this popular event.

The Office and Open Doors Café will be closed for two complete weeks over the Festive Period from 20<sup>th</sup> December through to 4<sup>th</sup> January. The Office re-opens Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January and Open Doors Café will re-open on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January.

Finally, on behalf of Ruth, George, and myself in the Office I take this opportunity to wish everyone a brilliant time over the holiday period. I hope you have time to relax and enjoy the festivities and rest in advance of the New Year 2026.

Thanks to all staff, volunteers and customers for the wonderful support you give to the office team and for your hard work in 2025. We look forward to working with you again in the New Year, a year that promises to be an interesting one as the sale of the church finally happens – we hope! Fingers crossed.

*Trevor Gay, Warwick Road Centre Manager*

## Open Doors Café Menu – December 2025 & January 2026

Opening Times: Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday. Snacks and Drinks:  
10am – 11.30am; Hot Meal: 12 noon – 1.30pm (last orders 1pm).

**Closed for Christmas Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December – Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> January.**



Main course £5, Pudding £2.50, Meal Deal (Main and Pudding, served with tea or coffee) £7.50. Telephone orders: 024 7622 0299

December 2025	
Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> December	Gammon & parsley sauce, potatoes, grilled tomatoes and peas Ginger sponge and custard
Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Cumberland sausages, onion gravy, potatoes and vegetables Lemon meringue pie
Friday 5 <sup>th</sup>	Chicken & mushroom pie, potatoes and vegetables Mincemeat & apple sponge and custard
Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas lunch
Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup>	Minced beef & onion pie, potatoes and vegetables Creamy rice pudding
Friday 12 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas lunch
Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup>	Pork & apple casserole Fruit trifle
Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Sausages, ratatouille and potatoes Peach crumble and ice cream
Friday 19 <sup>th</sup>	Minced beef cobbler, potatoes and vegetables Eton mess
20 <sup>th</sup> December – 4 <sup>th</sup> January	<b>Closed – café reopens on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January</b>
January 2026	
Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> January	Beef stew & dumplings Apple crumble and custard
Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup>	Chicken & mushroom pie, potatoes and vegetables Raspberry & white chocolate sponge and cream
Friday 9 <sup>th</sup>	Fisherman's pie and peas Bread pudding and custard
Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup>	Corned beef hash and cauliflower cheese Pecan & maple syrup sponge and custard
Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup>	Savoury sausage meat lattice, potatoes and vegetables Pear & cinnamon cake and custard

Friday 16 <sup>th</sup>	Chicken Chasseur, potatoes and vegetables Belgian waffles, berry sauce and ice cream
Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup>	Smoked haddock and parsley sauce, potatoes and peas Caramel apple cake and custard
Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup>	Cottage pie and vegetables Cherry tart and custard
Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Chicken Stroganoff, potatoes and vegetables Jam roly-poly and custard
Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup>	Meatballs, potatoes and vegetables Sticky toffee sponge and custard
Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup>	Steak in ale pie, potatoes and vegetables Fruit salad and ice cream
Friday 30 <sup>th</sup>	Minted lamb dinner Creamy rice pudding



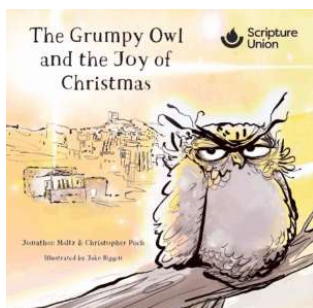
Christmas Activity Morning  
at  
Baginton Road Church  
CV3 6FP

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December 9.30am – 12.30pm

Welcoming all children from 0 – 11 years old to our Christmas Activity Morning where we will have fun exploring the true meaning of Christmas. As we retell the birth of Jesus, the children will have the opportunity to dress up and interact with the story. There will be crafts, games, songs and much more. All under 5s must be accompanied by an adult. If you would like to come along, please register via email at [office@bagintonroadurc.org.uk](mailto:office@bagintonroadurc.org.uk)  
There will be a £5 fee per child (no family will pay more than £10).



## Christmas Book Reviews



### **The Grumpy Owl and the Joy of Christmas**

By Jonathan Maltz and Christopher Poch, CHP, £5.49

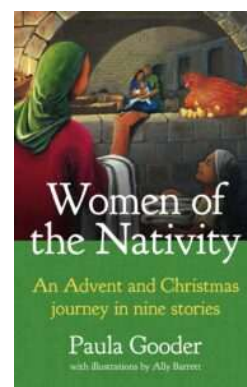
Here is a beautifully illustrated children's nativity story told from the unusual angle of a grumpy owl who lived in a little old empty barn in Bethlehem.

When a man, a woman and their donkey burst into his barn, making a lot of noise, the grumpy owl decides to fly away to somewhere quiet where he can be grumpy in peace. But can he find such a place, or will he return to his barn in time for a big, not-at-all grumpy, surprise?

### **Women of the Nativity – an Advent and Christmas Journey in Nine Stories**

By Paula Gooder, CHP, £9.89

Following on from her bestselling *Women of Holy Week*, Paula Gooder uses her extensive biblical expertise and storytelling skills to recreate the events of the nativity, from the promise of a future people to Sarah, to the presentation in the temple and the encounter with Anna, the prophet.



The story is told from the perspective of nine women in all including Mary, Elizabeth, Rachel, and others whom scripture records or tradition has imagined, such as the innkeeper's wife.

As we hear the familiar stories afresh through their words, the wonder of the incarnation and its consequences for good and for ill, come to vivid life in a new way.

Each story is accompanied by a painting by the priest-artist, Ally Barrett. This will be welcomed by all who love Paula's writing and respect her biblical expertise as well as those looking for inspiration for seasonal services from Advent to Candlemas.



### **Are you ready for Christmas?**

By Roger Carswell, 10Publishing, £3.99

Christmas is a hectic time of year: cooking big meals, buying and wrapping the presents, sending the cards, and wondering if we've forgotten something. All these preparations help to make Christmas such a special time of year, but before the very first Christmas it was

God who was getting the world ready to meet His Son. This book tells the story of God's Christmas plan, and explains how He can help us to be ready for Him today. You'll discover how the baby whom God sent that first Christmas is still His message of hope, joy, and peace to us today.





← scan me!



## WHAT'S ON THIS CHRISTMAS



There are lots of fantastic events happening locally - here are some of our favourites!

### **Vintage Sleigh Ride | Coventry City Centre**

**Saturday 29th November - Tuesday 23rd December**

Meet Santa, ride his sleigh and make family memories to cherish! Such a magical day out at Coventry Transport Museum.



### **The Snowman with Live Orchestra | Coventry Cathedral**

**Saturday 20 December**

With a live Orchestra and a solo from the Cathedral's Choristers, this is a magical screening with live performance will be an experience that can't be missed.



### **Festive Crafts | Charterhouse Coventry**

**Weds - Sun between 3rd December to 4th January.**

Make your own decoration to hang on the community tree or take home as a keepsake. After exploring the house and gardens, stop by the café for a hot chocolate or a hearty lunch.



### **Festive Afternoon Tea with Carols | Coombe Abbey**

**Various Dates from 30<sup>th</sup> November - 24<sup>th</sup> December**

Enjoy a delightful Festive Afternoon Tea with a New York Festive twist in the comfort of the Coombe Abbey Marquee.



### **Warwick Castle Ice Skating | Warwick**

**22nd November - 4th January**

The Castle's east front transforms into a magical skating rink for the ultimate festive experience on the ice.

And there's more!

Find more festive events at [www.coventryrocks.co.uk](http://www.coventryrocks.co.uk)

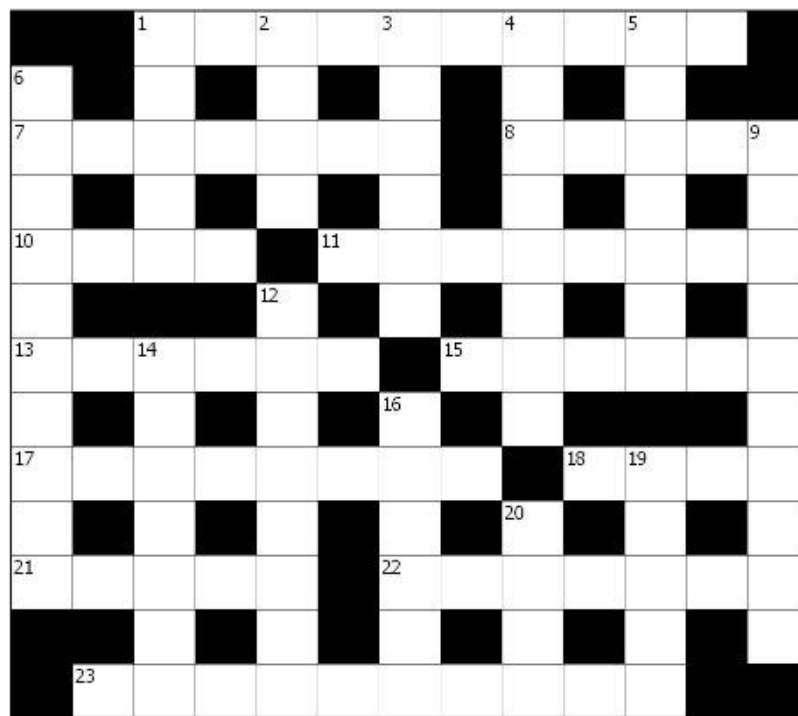
## FOLLOW US AND JOIN THE COMMUNITY!

There are thousands of local parents following us Social Media, and we'd love for you to join in! Just search Coventry Rocks and like our page!

[www.coventryrocks.co.uk](http://www.coventryrocks.co.uk)



## Puzzle Pages



### Across

- 1 Provisional meeting place of God and the Jews (Exodus 25:9) (10)
- 7 David's third son, killed when his head got caught in a tree during a battle with his father (2 Samuel 18:14,15) (7)
- 8 They ruled much of the west coast of South America in the 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16th centuries (5)
- 10 Small deer of European and Asian extraction (4)
- 11 Seized control of (Numbers 21:25) (8)
- 13 Terror (Luke 24:5) (6)
- 15 First World War heroine shot by the Germans in Brussels, Nurse Edith .... (6)
- 17 Stormy (8)
- 18 A bitter variety of this, together with lamb and unleavened bread, was the Passover menu for anyone unclean (Numbers 9:11) (4)
- 21 Arson (anag.) (5)
- 22 How John Newton described God's grace in his well-known hymn (7)
- 23 Habitation (Isaiah 27:10) (10)

### Down

- 1 .... and see that the Lord is good (Psalm 34:8) (5)
- 2 The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are as ... as a lion (Proverbs 28:1) (4)
- 3 One of the exiles, a descendant of Parosh, who married a foreign woman (Ezra 10:25) (6)
- 4 He escaped from Nob when Saul killed the rest of his family and joined David (1 Samuel 22:19,20) (8)
- 5 City and lake in Central Switzerland (7)
- 6 Offer your bodies as living .... , holy and pleasing to God (Romans 12:1) (10)
- 9 Pouches carried by horses (Genesis 49:14) (10)
- 12 One who accepts government by God (8)
- 14 Aromatic substance commonly used in Jewish ritual (Exodus 30:1) (7)
- 16 He asked Jesus, 'What is truth?' (John 18:38) (6)
- 19 Are (Romans 13:1) (5)
- 20 You are to give him the name Jesus, because he will ... his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21) (4)



## WORDSEARCH

Did the Old Testament expect Jesus to come? Yes indeed! Here are just some examples of OT prophesies:

- He would be born of a virgin. 'The virgin will conceive and give birth to a Son and will call Him Immanuel.' (Isaiah 7:14)
- He would be born in Bethlehem. 'But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel...' (Micah 5:2)
- His lineage would be of the line of David. 'I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land.' (Jeremiah 23:5-6).
- He would bring healing. 'Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy.' (Isaiah 35:5-6)
- He would be crucified. They pierce my hands and my feet. All my bones are on display; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment. (Psalm 22)
- He would rise from the dead. 'You will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, nor will you let your faithful one see decay...' (Psalm 16: 8-11)

BORN	LAME	H L T H G I R T B A L E
VIRGIN	MUTE	I M A K A U T J U S T R
IMMANUEL	CRUCIFIED	Y I I M L N U A T C R M
BETHLEHEM	PIERCE	O N L E E E D O O D B U
RULER	HANDS	G O R H U R A S E L U T
ISRAEL	FEET	I D D E N I G R I V G E
DAVID	GLOAT	G N I L A E H N S P S E
KING	RISE	M A V H M L D D L I H B
JUST	DEAD	F B A T M J M E R E O I
RIGHT	ABANDON	E A D E I F I C U R C A
HEALING	DECAY	E D E B L A B A N C T I
BLIND	REALM	T I E D E A D Y D E T F
DEAF		

*Solutions on p.24*

### SUDOKU (EASY)

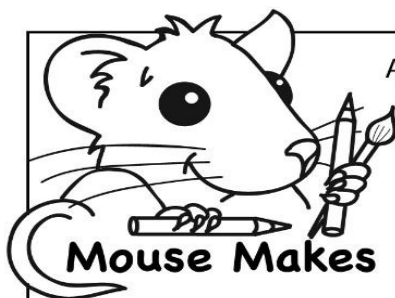
9			6					
2	7			8				6
	8	6		4	3	1	9	2
	9			1	6	5		
		5				2		
		3	4	5			7	
7	5	9	1	6		4	8	
3				7			2	5
				5				9

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### SUDOKU (MEDIUM)

	5					3	7	
			2	7	6			
7					1			
2		3		1				
		7				6		
				3		4		5
			1					9
			5	9	4			
	6	2					1	

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At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Jesus,  
God's Son and our Saviour  
coming into the world as a baby,  
and we look forward to the time  
when Jesus will come again,  
not as a baby but as the  
King of kings and Lord of lords!

read  
John 14:3

A baby needs clothes  
to keep warm like  
a snuggly sleep suit  
or a vest and nappy.

What were you dressed in?  
Jesus was wrapped in

read Luke 2:7

A baby needs somewhere  
to be born like at home  
or in a hospital.

Where were you born?  
Jesus was born  
in a stable in

read Luke 2:1-6

A baby needs  
somewhere  
to sleep like  
a crib or a cot.  
What did you  
sleep in?

Jesus slept in a

read Luke 2:7

A baby needs  
a name.

What name were  
you called?

Jesus was given  
a special name  
that had a  
special meaning.

read  
Matthew 1:21-23

# HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

NADOLIG LLAWEN ☆ NOLLAIG CHRÌDHEIL ☆ NOLLAG SHONA  
JOYEUX NOËL • FELIZ NAVIDAD • BUON NATALE • GOD JUL • FROHE WEIHNACHTEN

Dec25© deborah noble • parishpump.co.uk

## Church Contacts

 <p><b>Church Leader:</b> Simon Werrett tel: 07404 527330 e: <a href="mailto:simon@bagintonroadurc.org.uk">simon@bagintonroadurc.org.uk</a></p>	 <p><b>Family &amp; Community Worker:</b> Linda Werrett tel: 07593 907953 e: <a href="mailto:familyworker@bagintonroadurc.org.uk">familyworker@bagintonroadurc.org.uk</a></p>
 <p><b>Coventry Pastorate Minister:</b> Revd Debbie Brown tel: 024 7659 6433 e: <a href="mailto:db288338@gmail.com">db288338@gmail.com</a></p>	
<p><b>Baginton Road Church Office:</b> Baginton Road, Coventry CV3 6FP tel. 024 7641 9927 website: <a href="http://www.bagintonroadurc.org.uk">www.bagintonroadurc.org.uk</a> Usual office hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday &amp; Friday 7.30am - 1.30pm.</p> <p><b>Church Administrator:</b> Kevin Bodsworth email: <a href="mailto:office@bagintonroadurc.org.uk">office@bagintonroadurc.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Church Secretary:</b> Sue Davis e: <a href="mailto:secretary@bagintonroadurc.org.uk">secretary@bagintonroadurc.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Assistant Secretary:</b> Pauline Luckett e: <a href="mailto:assistantsecretary@bagintonroadurc.org.uk">assistantsecretary@bagintonroadurc.org.uk</a></p>	<p><b>Warwick Road Centre Office:</b> 10 Warwick Row, Coventry, CV1 1EX tel: 024 7622 0299 e: <a href="mailto:cityoffice@bagintonroadurc.org.uk">cityoffice@bagintonroadurc.org.uk</a> Office hours: Monday to Friday, 9am – 4pm</p> <p><b>Room Bookings:</b> tel: 024 7641 9927 email: <a href="mailto:rooms@bagintonroadurc.org.uk">rooms@bagintonroadurc.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Premises Caretaker, Baginton Road:</b> George Stone tel; 07468 585611 e: <a href="mailto:caretaker@bagintonroadurc.org.uk">caretaker@bagintonroadurc.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Safeguarding:</b> If you have a safeguarding concern regarding a child, young person or adult which you feel you need to share then please email: <a href="mailto:safeguarding@bagintonroadurc.org.uk">safeguarding@bagintonroadurc.org.uk</a></p>	

	<p><b>St Andrew's House</b>  <b>19 St Andrew's Road, Earlsdon</b>  <b>Coventry CV5 6FP</b>  <b>Residential, respite or short stay care</b>  <b>in a Christian home.</b>  <b>St Andrew's can help!</b>  <b>Telephone Sharron: 02476 673745</b>  <b><u><a href="http://www.standrewshouse.org.uk">www.standrewshouse.org.uk</a></u></b></p>
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### SOLUTION - SUDUKO (EASY)

9	3	4	6	2	1	8	5	7
2	7	1	5	8	9	3	4	6
5	8	6	7	4	3	1	9	2
8	9	7	2	1	6	5	3	4
1	4	5	3	9	7	2	6	8
6	2	3	4	5	8	9	7	1
7	5	9	1	6	2	4	8	3
3	1	8	9	7	4	6	2	5
4	6	2	8	3	5	7	1	9

### SOLUTION - SUDUKO (MEDIUM)

1	5	6	9	4	8	3	7	2
3	9	4	2	7	6	1	5	8
7	2	8	3	5	1	9	4	6
2	4	3	6	1	5	8	9	7
5	8	7	4	2	9	6	3	1
6	1	9	8	3	7	4	2	5
4	3	5	1	6	2	7	8	9
8	7	1	5	9	4	2	6	3
9	6	2	7	8	3	5	1	4

### CROSSWORD SOLUTION

		T	A	B	E	R	N	A	C	L	E		
S		A		O		A		B		U			
A	B	S	A	L	O	M		I	N	C	A	S	
C		T		D		I		A		E		A	
R	O	E	S			C	A	P	T	U	R	E	D
I					T		H		H		N		D
F	R	I	G	H	T		C	A	V	E	L	L	
I		N			E		P		R				E
C	Y	C	L	O	N	I	C		H	E	R	B	
E		E		C			L		S		X		A
S	O	N	A	R			A	M	A	Z	I	N	G
		S		A			T		V		S		S
	S	E	T	T	L	E	M	E	N	T			

### WORDSEARCH SOLUTION

H	L	T	H	G	I	R	T	B	A	L	E
I	M	A	K	A	U	T	J	U	S	T	R
Y	I	I	M	L	N	U	A	T	C	R	M
O	N	L	E	E	E	D	O	O	D	B	U
G	O	R	H	U	R	A	S	E	L	U	T
I	D	D	E	N	I	G	R	I	V	G	E
G	N	I	L	A	E	H	N	S	P	S	E
M	A	V	H	M	L	D	D	L	I	H	B
F	B	A	T	M	J	M	E	R	E	O	I
E	A	D	E	I	F	I	C	U	R	C	A
E	D	E	B	L	A	B	A	N	C	T	I
T	I	E	D	E	A	D	Y	D	E	T	F

The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily  
the views of the URC or its congregation



## Worship at Baginton Road URC – December 2025

Morning service: 10.30am; Evening service: 6.30pm  
(unless otherwise stated)



Date	Time	Preacher	
7 <sup>th</sup> December 2025	am	Simon Werrett	Church Parade and Gift Sunday Holy Communion
	pm	Margaret Marshall and Sue Matthews	
14 <sup>th</sup> December	am	Nativity led by Liz Kershaw Christmas through Poetry and Song, led by the Choir	
	pm		
21 <sup>st</sup> December	am	Simon Werrett Carols by Candlelight	
	pm		
24 <sup>th</sup> December (Wednesday)	5pm	Crawford Dow	Christmas Eve
25 <sup>th</sup> December (Thursday)	am	Revd Debbie Brown	Christmas Day
28 <sup>th</sup> December (Sunday)	am	Carol Praise led by Sue Davis and Liz Kershaw	
4 <sup>th</sup> January 2026	am	Simon Werrett Simon Werrett	Holy Communion
	pm		
11 <sup>th</sup> January	am	Revd Debbie Brown	Holy Communion
18 <sup>th</sup> January	am	Simon Werrett Revd Ralph Hanger	
	pm		
25 <sup>th</sup> January	am	Simon Werrett Simon Werrett	Café-style service
	4.30pm		
1 <sup>st</sup> February	am	Simon Werrett & Crawford Dow Revd Debbie Brown	Church Parade Holy Communion
	pm		



### Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December – Candlelight Service Refreshments

We will once again be serving refreshments after the Candlelight Carol Service on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December.

Please make your way to the small hall at the end of the service, where you will find warm mulled wine (with or without alcohol), stollen and mince pies.

We hope you will be able to join us.

*Lesley Rice*





# Christmas Services at Baginton Road Church

## **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December**

10.30 am All-age Nativity Service

6.30 pm Christmas through Poetry, Prose & Carols

## **Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December**

10.30 am A "Christmas Jumper" Special

6.30 pm Carols by Candlelight

followed by mulled wine and mince pies

## **Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December**

10.30 am and 6.00 pm Carols in the Car Park

with coffee, hot chocolate and mince pies

## **Christmas Eve**

5.00 pm Family Service

## **Christmas Day**

10.30 am Morning Service