

Good NEWS

The WORD
Became FLESH
and LIVED among us
and WE beheld
HIS GLORY
full of GRACE
and TRUTH



A Christmas Creed

I believe in Jesus Christ and in the beauty of the gospel begun in Bethlehem.

I believe in the One whose spirit glorified a little town; and whose spirit still brings music to persons all over the world, in towns both large and small.

I believe in the One for whom the crowded inn could find no room; and I confess that my heart still sometimes wants to exclude Christ from my life today.

I believe in the One whom the rulers of the earth ignored, and the proud could never understand; whose life was among common people, whose welcome came from persons of hungry hearts.

I believe in the One who proclaimed the love of God to be invincible.

I believe in the One whose cradle was a mother's arms, whose modest home in Nazareth had love for its only wealth, who looked at persons and made them see what God's love saw in them, who by love brought sinners back to purity, and lifted human weakness up to meet the strength of God.

I confess my ever-lasting need of God; the need of forgiveness for our selfishness and greed, the need of new life for empty souls, the need of love for hearts grown cold.

I believe in God who gives us the best of himself.

I believe in Jesus, the son of the living God, born in Bethlehem this night, for me and for the world.

Author unknown





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A list of serving Officers can be found in *Who's Who?*

*Well this is it! The last
editorial that I will write for the
church magazine and here I am
sitting in front of the computer
thinking 'where do I start'!*

It has been a privilege to have
been entrusted with the
responsibility of Editor and to
be able to serve in that way. I
have been most grateful to
you, the reader, for your
patience, contributions, and
for reading the magazine
month in month out. I have
learnt a lot: computer skills
for starters and fascinating
facts and information about
all sorts of things.

Most of all I am grateful to a
group of very committed
people, without whom the
magazine would not exist –
the Editorial Team; Martin
Hall, Stuart and Carol Marsh
and Tim Sanderson. There
was also, of course, Steve
Farley, Jacqui Adams and
Lydia Goodchild. Thank you
to each of you for your time,
energy, thoughts and writing
etc. To Martin, Stuart and
Tim especially thank you for
your willingness to continue
and hold the 'fort'. (continued)

Editorial (continued) For me, one of the main purposes of the magazine was to be a resource to the church which could be used to encourage and challenge those within the church family, and those who read it out of curiosity, to think more about what and who they believe in, and hopefully to help some to grow in their love and commitment to the Lord Jesus,' the author and perfecter of our faith'.

Finally, from the Editorial team we say: Happy Christmas – not because of all the festivities, great fun as they can be, but because whatever you do, whoever you meet, you have the joy of knowing personally the Saviour of the World, at Christmas and every day of your life. Now that is worth the celebrations!!

And absolutely finally a special thank you to Serena for reading all the editorials!!

Val

Dear Friends, _____

What's the strangest or most useless gift you have ever received? If you're a fan of Winnie the Pooh, you may remember what he and Piglet gave Eeyore for his birthday.

Piglet's gift was a balloon, but before he was able to give it to Eeyore, he accidentally burst it. Pooh gave Eeyore a jar of honey, but just to check that it really did contain honey, he tasted it all the way through, right down to the bottom. Hence, Eeyore's birthday present consisted of a burst balloon and an empty jar. However, Pooh and Piglet persuaded him that the jar was really useful for putting things in and as they left him, they were very pleased to see that he was almost enjoying himself by putting the remnants of the balloon into the jar and taking them out again.

No doubt there will be plenty of strange, useless presents given and received this Christmas. On a global scale, what does the world need? Peace in Afghanistan? A way out of the appalling debt crisis we have created through our own acquisitiveness, by spending money we don't have on things we don't need? What was God's Gift two thousand years



ago? It was a Baby. Some people might think that was the strangest and most pointless gift of all. How could a helpless infant solve the avalanche of human problems?

In fact, the Gift was neither strange nor pointless, because that Baby grew to be a Man who offered a pattern of behaviour that would indeed bring peace in Afghanistan and even solve the world's economic problems if it was put into practise, but human sin makes that impossible, so what do we do?

We realise that violence and greed are not the real problems. The real problem is sin. Violence or greed are the results of sin. The only way to deal with sin – yours, mine and the whole of humanity's – is to nail it to the cross with Jesus and we do that when each human heart is given to Him in faith.

Logically, global problems can only be addressed by global solutions, so how can an individual response make any difference? The answer is that with each individual heart that is given to Him, God's Kingdom grows. As the hymn says:

“Soul by soul and silently, its shining bounds increase.”

By the grace of God, that wonderful miracle is taking place in countless lives here and now and the only reason it can happen at all is because

“God loved the world so much that He gave His one and only Son.”

Have you ever thought of the present God would love to have? It's the love and obedience of your heart and mine and we can only give them to Him because a Baby was born in a stable in Bethlehem. What a Gift! God bless you this Christmas!

Your Pastor and friend,
Charles S. Martin

Prayer Focus

I love Christmas. It is my favourite time of year. I find it really easy to pray during the Christmas period, as the elements of



the Christmas story are great at reminding me to pray about certain things. I hope you will find it useful as you think towards Christmas.

Mary & Joseph

Mary & Joseph were ordinary people like you and me, chosen by God to do his work. Thank God for all that he has done in your life, for the blessings that he has given you, as you have walked with him. Ask God to help you trust him, so that he can continue to work in your life.



The Innkeeper

The Innkeeper was busy. Pray for those who will be working over Christmas. People who work shifts and may only spend a fraction of Christmas Day with their families. Ask God to keep them safe.

Shepherds



Shepherds were alone out on the fields. We pray for those that are homeless or have no families to spend Christmas with. Lift up the charities such as **Crisis at Christmas** who put on special events to help these people.

King Herod & the Three Wise men

King Herod & the Wise men were men of wisdom and authority. Let us pray for our Queen and government. We ask that God works through them to show his glory. We especially think of those in positions of authority who are Christians. We ask that God will continue to work in their lives.



The Star



The star was a guiding light. Pray that God will use you as a guiding light to others. "You are the light of the world....Don't hide your light under a basket! Instead put it on a stand and let it shine for all." Matthew 5:14-15.

Jesus

Jesus was the baby, the hero of our story. Jesus went on to die on the cross for our sins. Jesus loves us whoever we are, regardless of what we do. He will always be there for us. Read Psalm 103, and then pray.



I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Zoe McQuillin

Christmas Sudoku

To keep your brain ticking over during the Christmas and New Year break we have devised a new holiday Sudoku. Some readers thought that the last puzzle was too easy so this one is two grades harder and rated as “challenging”! All you have to do is fill the empty cells so that each 3 x 3 box, each row and each column contains all of the nine characters found in the Christmas phrase **WE3KINGS!** Have fun and good luck!

	S		N		3			
G		3					S	
	N			!	K			
I					G	!		3
		K				G		
N		G	I					S
			G	N			!	
	E					K		W
			E		!		I	

The solution is on page 20.

Thank you to Martin Hall for devising this Quiz!

'Christmas Card Jesus' – or more?

The Christmas cards are on the shops' shelves. Many of them are winter scenes with no reference to Jesus or anything 'religious'. However there are some with a religious theme; replicas of famous paintings, depicting Mary and the baby Jesus, or images of the wise men or the stable. This is allowed as they are iconic representations of the 'Christmas Story' which is one of the Christian religion's festivals, and as a society we are very careful to acknowledge different religions' festivals.

The question is; is Christmas just another religious festival? In one sense yes it is. The religious festival Christ Mass was the established church's celebration of the birth of Christ. Over time the paraphernalia around this amazing event has got bigger and more distant from the original facts, and it is this paraphernalia that is the focus of the festival we see around us today. Still it is something to do with a sweet baby born long ago, who was given presents so we now give and expect to receive gifts.

But how many famous people have their birthday celebrated to such an extent? Or indeed have their birth foretold with such accuracy. The birth of Jesus was an extraordinary event in history, not only because of the virgin birth, extraordinary as that was, but because of the man the baby became.

At the beginning of his gospel, Matthew emphasizes two of Jesus' names. He is **Immanuel – God with us**. This is a statement of staggering proportions. It declares that the Creator God, the God of history has not just condescended to give us a representation of himself but has given us Himself. As Michael Green comments in his study on Matthew* 'this is ...so exclusive. It does not fit with the pluralist idea that each of us is getting through to God in his or her own way. No... God has got through to us in His way.' Another name is; **Jesus – Yahweh (God) saves**. Matthew emphasizes this name as it shows the purpose of God through Jesus –He didn't come just to be an extraordinary teacher or miraculous healer. He came so that He could save His people from their sins.

Jesus came to be with us and show us His way of living. A way of living that was to transform people to their very core in terms of their understanding of themselves, relationship with others and God Himself. Through a

relationship with Jesus we are being called to become all that He has made us to be, by putting him first in every aspect of our lives, in the development of our; character, influences, right living, devotion, ambitions, relationships and attitudes.

Not only in His teaching did Jesus challenge us, but in His actions He encourages us. Through His miracles He demonstrated His authority and power over the natural world, over sickness and disease but also power and authority over evil. If He could do all this then can we not confidently give Him our lives into His safe keeping?

However, even if Jesus lived an extraordinary life and taught 'as one with authority' but then died an ordinary death, He probably wouldn't be on Christmas cards today! He lived knowing that He had come to save His people from their sins. So at the right time He knowingly and willingly allowed himself to be brutally killed, and took on himself all our wrongs, pain, stubbornness, arrogance, selfishness and loveless-ness so that we could be released from them. But because He was perfect, indeed God, death could not contain Him in the grave and He rose again and so demonstrating His total and absolute power and authority over everything.

So as we buy, send or receive 'religious' Christmas cards, may they draw us to the person of Jesus, - who saves, God in human form. Who wants us to be all that He has created us to be, who will never leave us, and who can identify with our pain and suffering as well as our joys. Who loves each of us with such a passion that He gave up his life so that we might live, and live life in a totally revolutionary way! So this Christmas we each have a choice to make; do we celebrate, the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus, God with us, and allow him to be King of our lives, or do we see him as an historical figure, who's iconic image as a babe in a manger, as portrayed on Christmas cards, but nothing more?

Val Cookney.

* Michael Green - "The message of Matthew". The Bible speaks today series, IVP.

Things to do when snowed in.....

After the last two years of heavy snow, it seems that we are all gearing up in case it happens again. Let's hope not, but just in case, we offer some ideas (serious and light-hearted) for what to do when snowed in at home:

- Read a Christian Book
- Tidy the loft
- Invite your neighbours to coffee/tea
- Phone someone you have not spoken to for a long time
- Write a book review, or testimony of God's goodness, for *GoodNEWS*.
- Knit something for charity
- Plan a holiday
- Clear the snow for a less-able neighbour
- Re-read the excellent articles in the past year's *GoodNEWS!*
- Re-decorate a room.

The *GoodNEWS* editorial team.

In Touch

In October we watched a film entitled "Faith like Potatoes" which told the story about the life of a farmer who risked everything for God. This proved to be a very interesting and moving story and we were fortunate to see the film in the upper room with the large screen and special lighting. This possibly helped make up for the disappointment that popcorn and ices were not available on this occasion!

Our next meeting will be on January 24th when we will be having our New Year meal in the church. Please look on the notice board for details nearer the time.

Meanwhile, as we are not meeting in December, we wish you all a very happy, peaceful and restful time at Christmas.

Janet Wade

Family News

A much loved member of this congregation, Elise Burden, has now moved into a home in Axminster to live near her son and family. Elise can now be contacted at the address shown below and would welcome contact from her friends here.

Tudor Cottage
7-8 South Street
Axminster, Devon.
EX13 5AD

We are upholding Lesley and Ted Sparks and Lesley's daughter and Son-in-law in our thoughts and prayers at this difficult time, and send them our love.

Our love and sympathy also go to Alison Rumble and her family, whose Father has died recently.

Our congratulations to Betty and Roy Billins. Betty is now a Great Grandmother to twin girls. Also, congratulations to Carol and David Walters. Their daughter Jo gave birth to a little girl, Hannah Elizabeth, on 9th November.

Jenny and Phil Machell have moved to "Beech Cottage", Lower Station Road, Newick. BN8 4HU. Tel. 01825 723142.

The Fellowship

We do not meet in December as the 4th Wednesday is so close to the Christmas period. We do, however have two events in January 2012

Wednesday 25th January at 2.30pm

We welcome back a very good friend of the Fellowship – Stuart Dew. The title of his talk is: 'Milestones'.

There will be the usual Bring and Buy Stall

Saturday 28th January at 10.30am

Coffee Morning; with our friends of the Art Group, when we have the pleasure of seeing some of their work.

A warm welcome is given to all at both these events.

December Church Diary



1st Daytime House Groups
Thursday 7.45pm Coffee

8.00pm Autumn at
Lindfield - A witnessing
Church, Jonty Frith

3rd 8.45 — Prayer Meeting
Saturday 9.30am at All Saints

4th 9.30am The Pastor -
Sunday Communion
11.15am The Pastor
6.30pm The Pastor

6th Village Festival Night
Tuesday

7th 12.30pm Lunch
Wednesday Fellowship

9th 12.30pm Lunch
Friday Fellowship

10th 8.45 — Prayer Meeting
Saturday 9.30am at All Saints

11th 9.30am The Pastor
Sunday 11.15am The Pastor
6.30pm The Pastor -
Communion/
Healing

17th 8.45 — Prayer Meeting
Saturday 9.30am at All Saints

18th 10.30am The Pastor -
Sunday Communion
4.30pm Christmas Family
Service - Josh
Thomas

21st 7.30pm Christmas Concert
Wednesday

24th 4.30pm Crib Service – The
Saturday Pastor

7.00pm Carols by
Candlelight The
Pastor

25th 10.00am Christmas Day
Sunday Family Service -
the Pastor

6.30pm Carols at Ryecroft

JANUARY 2012

1st 10.30 am Family Worship
Sunday and Communion
the Pastor

6.30 pm Evening Worship

*Please note these dates are correct at
time of printing, but watch the weekly
notices in case of change.*



HAPPY CHRISTMAS FROM US ALL

Mommy's Prayers

Prayer for December 26.

Dear God,

Do these religious holidays exhaust you as much as they exhaust us? Because it's December 26, I am utterly exhausted, and our house looks like a bomb went off in every room. I'm not complaining Lord, because most of this Christmas season has been so magical with little ones in the house. It's enormously fun to play Santa and buy their presents in secret. Singing the traditional Christmas Carols with them, and watching their eyes widen when we talk about how a baby came to save the whole world, it's rapturous. And the lights – just seeing my baby mesmerised by the lights that are everywhere, that's reason enough for the season. And yet, Lord, there is endless cooking and cleaning and shopping and wrapping and mailing and making sure everyone we've ever met receives our family Christmas card, which took me four hours on the computer to get perfect. And then there are the family dynamics to navigate, already tricky but made far trickier now that precious grandchildren are in the mix. Now it's over, God, for this year at least, and I'm feeling deeply grateful and deeply spent. Thank you for the Christmas season, and thank you that it only comes once a year.

Amen.

Christmas Post-Box

At the end of November, a giant fluffy post-box will appear in the concourse, for Church members to post Christmas cards to other church members only. We hope you will use this facility as opposed to using Royal Mail. We just ask that you give a donation in place of buying stamps. This giving will go towards Worthing Churches Homeless Project.

The final posting date will be **Friday 16th December 2011**, and we will have the letters sorted for collection on *Sunday 18th December 2011*.

A few tips for successful delivery:

Please put the Full name including surname of the person you are sending to.

(We have lots of Fiona's, Kath's, David's etc.)

Please put the full first line of the address. (We only have the *Who's Who* to go by and some people may not be in there and we can't deliver it if it is not collected.)

Please confine addresses to the Lindfield, Haywards Heath and Cuckfield areas only.

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas - The Post-Box Team

Balcombe United Reformed Church

Bramble Hill, Balcombe RH17 6HR

Our services are held weekly at 10.30am.

Visitors are welcome to join us.

Speakers for December are as follows:

December 4th	Matthew Wren
December 11th	Philip Wren
December 18th	4.00 pm CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT - Charles Martin
December 25th	CHRISTMAS DAY - Philip Wren
January 1st	Philip Wren



Sunday Services explained...

The **9.30am service** is an opportunity for all age groups to join in a relaxed informal time.

There is a crèche, and after about 20 minutes, children and young people up to age 14 go out to their own groups on most Sundays.

Coffee is served between the morning services.

The **11:15am service** is a traditional service.

(Exceptions to these times are shown in the Diary).

At **6:30pm** it is sometimes a celebration, sometimes a quieter ministry time and sometimes an open communion service or something quite different!

Personal prayer is available after every service. Prayer requests and brief statements of praise for answered prayer can be put in the red book on the concourse table. We can also offer personal prayer ministry at home or in hospital.

We do not take up an offering during the services, but those wishing to give are invited to place a gift in one of the bowls at the doors before or after the service. Thank you.

Recordings of services can be borrowed free from the church.

FLOWER ROTA



Arranging

Distributing

December

4th	Heather Swann	Sue Tester
11th	Audrey McKee	Barbara Shepherd
18th	Christmas Decorations	No Distribution
25th	Christmas Decorations	No Distribution

January 2012

1st	Christmas Decorations	No Distribution
8th	Gladys Porter	Jo Bloxham
15th	Serena Nathan	Iris Bingham
22nd	Lesley Sparks	Heather Swann
29th	Mary Comber	Janet Sanderson

LINDFIELD UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
HIGH STREET, LINDFIELD



A TRADITIONAL CAROL CONCERT

**LOTS OF CAROLS, A BRASS BAND, A CHOIR AND
CHRISTMAS READINGS PRESENTED BY**

COPTHORNE SILVER BAND

LINDFIELD URC SUNDAY MORNING SINGERS

GUEST ARTISTS

ON

WEDNESDAY 21ST DECEMBER

@ 7.30PM

ADMISSION FREE – MINCE PIES AND COFFEE / TEA

**DONATIONS IN AID OF ST PETER AND ST JAMES HOSPICE
AND OTHER GOOD CAUSES**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE FROM THE CHURCH



As in previous years, our Mission Giving in December is for the support of the Worthing Churches Homeless Projects. The following article is from Sean Kenny their Community Fundraiser

Worthing Churches Homeless Projects have experienced an increase in the demand for their services in the past year. Over the last two quarters they have seen a steep increase in the number of new people accessing their services at St Clare's Day Centre as well as an increase in the number of people telephoning the charity for help. Over the last two quarters 60 new people visited the centre each quarter, compared with 54 the preceding quarter and an average of 42 in previous quarters. People visit the day centre for advice, food, a change of clothes, access to medical help and much more. It is the first port of call; from here they are assessed for entry into one of the Charity's four hostels.

Sue Stevens, PR & Fundraising Manager for the charity said 'Due to the current economic climate, we have been expecting an increase in the number of people needing our help; however, these figures have seen a larger percentage than anticipated. Sadly the recession is bringing difficult times for many of us. Over the past few years we have helped around 450 people annually; we will wait to see what the figure will be this year. With our extensive services, we reduce the number of people sleeping rough on the streets. Unfortunately, there is a constant waiting list of people waiting to access our hostels with normally around 10-15 people waiting for rooms to become available. We have recently extended one of our projects to better serve the needs of the clients and we are constantly looking at ways to evolve our services. As with every service, we have received cuts in our funding this year, hopefully we will continue to manage to be there for those that need our help.'

This year the charity have extended their Recovery Project to provide tier two accommodation for those who no longer need 24 hour a day support and are ready to try living independently. Each client has their own bedsit and are free

to come and leave as they wish. They can have visitors and cook for themselves. If they need to they can call on the Recovery Project staff in a separate part of the building. This has increased the number of rooms in this accommodation to 22.

All of the charity's other services continue to be provided; the Short Term Assessment Hostel, the Stepping Stones Project and the Move On Project. They are also continuing their outreach work with past clients, offering a drop-in café facility at a local church on Monday afternoons. This has proven to reduce the number of clients returning to the street as they can work with them as soon as a problem occurs.

Following the success of their Worthing town centre shop, they have just opened their second shop in Strand Parade in Goring. This shop sells normal charity shop items but also specialises in refurbishing second hand bikes offering them for sale as well as offering servicing and repairs. By developing this service they are able to train their clients in bike repair and maintenance as well as providing them with means of transport and a way to keep fit. It is hoped that the charity will receive donations of bikes that people have at the back of their garden sheds that are no longer in use, to repair and sell. This shop is another step in trying to secure sustainable income for the charity in these desperate times. If anyone has a bike they would like to donate, please contact the Fundraising Team on 01903 227829 to arrange collection.

This year sadly the charity have had to cancel some of their fundraising events due to a lack of ticket sales / registrations. Next year they are planning a sponsored Sleepout on 28th January, have slots secured in the Brighton Marathon on 15th April for sponsored runners (they are still seeking one or two more sponsored runners if anyone is interested), a 108 miles bike ride of the South Downs Way over two days (date to be confirmed) and an Abseil at Peacehaven Cliffs on 7th July. If any of you are brave enough to take part in the abseil or would like details on any of their other events, more information can be found on their website www.wchp.org.uk or by contacting Sean on 01903 286480.

More information can be found on the display board and table in the concourse. If you would like to give please use the special envelopes and place your gift in the offertory at any Sunday service. Please complete a gift aid slip if appropriate.

Thank you.

The 1 Corinthians 13 of Christmas

If I decorate my house with beautiful bows, strands of twinkling lights and shiny baubles, but do not show love to my family, I'm just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of mince pies, roasting a perfect turkey, and lay a magnificent table, but have no love for my guests, I am just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, carol in the nursing home, and give all that I have to charity, but do not have compassion in my heart for those in need, I am just another social service; it profits me nothing.

If I decorate the tree with shimmering angels and crocheted snowflakes and attend a myriad of holiday parties but do not focus on Christ, I have missed the point.

Love stops the cooking to hug the child. Love sets aside the decorating to help one's wife with boring housework. Love puts the Christmas present shopping on hold in order to run the elderly neighbour to the doctor. Love is kind, though harried and tired. Love doesn't envy another's home that has more expensive presents, or even coordinated Christmas china and table linen. Love doesn't yell at the children to get out of the way; love is glad that they are there to be in the way. Love doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return, but rejoices in giving to those who can't.

Love bears all things, even irritating relatives. It believes all things, and encourages teenagers to aim high for their future. It hopes all things, endures all things, even a spouse who is depressed about their job prospects. Love never fails other people. Computer games will crash, even cashmere jumpers will wear out, and golf clubs will get lost. But the gift of love will endure forever. Happy Christmas!

Source: Parish Pump

The GIFTfm

Lindfield United Reformed Church is launching a brand new radio station run by a youth team for the week proceeding Christmas. It will be called 'TheGIFTfm', with the strap line of "Unwrap the meaning of Christmas" The youth from churches within the surrounding area will create, produce and air their own shows. Additionally, services from the churches will be broadcast for members of the community who cannot be there, especially for the residents of Compton House Christian Care Home.

A temporary studio will be set up in the church youth room. Dan McQuillin is helping to run the station along with youth workers from All Saints and Christ Church, Haywards Heath. He said "Into the frenzy of Christmas Christians must never stop telling the real story, sharing the genuine hope and celebrating the greatest gift of all. TheGIFTfm is an exciting opportunity to break into the secular and spread the message of God's gift to the whole community."

A wide selection of mainstream Christmas music and Christian carols will be played and the presenters will soon be beginning to plan their shows. Gina Balicki, 16, said "I'm really excited about working on the radio station. It's an opportunity we wouldn't otherwise get around here and it will be a great thing to be involved in."

The station will be officially launched on the 18th December broadcasting a live service from the church. The radio will approximately have a two mile radius, stretching to cover most of Haywards Heath, Ardingly, Scaynes Hill and Lindfield. It will be broadcast on 87.9 FM and you will hopefully be able to tune in online through the website www.thegiftfm.com , and visit the Facebook page at theGIFTfm or the Twitter page at @theGIFTfm.

Hannah Durrant

Ssshhhhhhh, don't tell anyone



Christmas 2011

Book Review

“The rage against God” by Peter Hitchens, Continuum Books (2010)

Peter Hitchens wrote “The rage against God” as a counter to his brother’s book, “God is not great” (Christopher Hitchens, Atlantic books, 2007). One of his objectives in writing was to “explain how I became convinced, by reason and experience, of the necessity and rightness of a form of Christianity that is modest, accommodating and thoughtful – but ultimately uncompromising about its vital truth”.

One reviewer called “The rage against God” a “rattling good read”. In parts it was, but the writing style seemed laboured at times and pursued paths of enquiry about the rise of atheism further off the track than I thought necessary.

In discussing how God was excluded from the lives of young people in the Soviet era, Peter Hitchens says that, “If we do not learn faith then, it is unlikely we shall ever learn it”. I don’t agree as there is plenty of evidence of people coming to faith in later years.

However, I liked many of his arguments. For example, in response to his brother’s statement that “the order to ‘love thy neighbour as thyself’ is too extreme and too strenuous to be obeyed”, Peter Hitchens writes, “Christianity is without doubt difficult and taxing, and all of us must fail to emulate the perfection of Christ himself, but we are far better for trying than for not trying, and we know that there is forgiveness available for honest failure. My brother’s suggestion that we are urged to be superhuman ‘on pain of death and torture’ reveals a misunderstanding both of the nature of the commandments and of the extent of forgiveness”.

In conclusion I would certainly recommend “The rage against God”.

Written by someone brought up as a Christian, who burnt his Bible when aged 15, but in later years returned to the Church, it is a thought provoking and rewarding book, but it does demand a bit of work on your part.

Martin Hall

In the News

NIGERIA

Sadly, there are ongoing troubles and atrocities in Nigeria where recently, dozens of people have lost their lives. Many Christians were among those killed in the north-eastern town of Damaturu where churches were targeted in bomb attacks which lasted around ninety minutes. The Islamist group Boko Haram, which means "Western education is forbidden" were thought to be responsible and there have been running gun battles between them and security forces.

Nigeria, as a whole, is a deeply divided country with many Christians in the south and Muslims to the north leading to numerous violent clashes resulting in many dead and injured.

15 MARATHONS IN 15 DAYS

Fifteen years ago John Kirkby founded the charity **Christians Against Poverty** to help people overwhelmed by debt. Working alone in his bedroom office with meagre funds he started to help many persons in need and, from there, his charity has expanded tremendously and now has 190 help centres in churches all over the country.

People whose debts have spiralled out of control feel there is no hope for them and no help available, but **CAP** are able to assist them by contacting their creditors, working out budgets and supporting them until they are, once again, debt-free.

John, now aged fifty, is attempting to run fifteen marathons in fifteen days to raise awareness of the plight of the poor. He started on a bleak, damp day in Edinburgh on 8th November, before running four more in England, five in Australia before, hopefully, completing the final five in New Zealand. Before starting he said that he would be thinking about Jesus' message to us all to remember the poor, as he runs. He has already raised £227,000 and hopes to have more than half a million pounds by the time he has finished.

At the time of writing, he has only just started this huge undertaking but you can find out what happened to him on www.cap15.org.

Carol Marsh



What else is happening in the village?

Wed. 14 Dec : 12.15-2pm Tiger Arts Light Lunch and Concert in the Tiger and then in All Saints Church.

This month - "Anything Goes".

And further afieldArdingly

Friday 16 Dec : 7pm Wakehurst Place. Carol Singing under the magnificent Christmas Tree.

Sudoku Solution

E	S	!	N	G	3	I	W	K
G	K	3	W	E	I	N	S	!
W	N	I	S	!	K	E	3	G
I	W	E	K	S	G	!	N	3
S	3	K	!	W	N	G	E	I
N	!	G	I	3	E	W	K	S
K	I	S	G	N	W	3	!	E
!	E	N	3	I	S	K	G	W
3	G	W	E	K	!	S	I	N

Christmas Crackers

Another Cracker has been printed this month in case you have not kept last month's *GoodNEWS!*

Please return to the *GoodNEWS* pigeon hole, by 11:00 am on Sunday 4th December.

Thank you, The *GoodNEWS* team.

SUNDAY WORSHIP:

- 9.30am Service for all the family, including crèche and Lighthouse (Junior church) (Most weeks, children leave after 20 minutes for their own activities).
Holy Communion (1st Sunday)
- 11.15am Traditional Worship
Holy Communion (4th Sunday)
- 6.30pm Evening Service
Holy Communion (2nd Sunday)

Healing services as announced

PRAYER MEETINGS:

- Mon 9.30am An Hour of Prayer
- Wed 9.45am Short Service of Intercession
- Thur 8.00pm Church Prayer Evening
(As announced)
- Sat 8.45am Three Churches Prayer Meeting.
– 9.30am Venue rotates between the three churches.

REGULAR ACTIVITIES:

- Mon 10.00am Art Group
- 5.45pm Boys' Brigade - Anchor Boys (5–7 years)
- 6.15pm Boys' Brigade - Junior Section (8–11 years)
- 7.15pm Boys' Brigade – Company Section (11+ years)
- Tue 10.00am Stepping Stones (Parents and toddlers - term time)
- 7.45pm In Touch (4th Tues) for women of all ages
- Wed 2.30pm The Fellowship (4th Wed) for mature ladies and gentlemen
- Thur 10.00am Pop-In (for coffee and a chat)
- 8.00pm Church Meeting (2nd Thur)
- Fri 7.15pm Zest (Years 6–9) games, craft, tuck and a bible message (term time)
- Sun 8.00pm Youth Fellowship

During the Autumn, House Groups will not meet - see the 'Autumn at Lindfield - A growing Church' Programme (Page 10).

The church is open most mornings from 10.00am to 12.30pm

Church (payphone): 01444 484620

Charles Martin (Pastor)

Mobile No: 07821 904785

Josh Thomas (Youth Pastor)

Youth Office: 01444 487607

Mobile No: 07598 779553

Boys' Brigade:

Geoffrey Cocksedge 01444 474007

Cradle Roll:

Sue Tester 01444 482810

Flowers:

Betty Billins 01444 484494

Hall Booking Secretary:

Carol Walters 01444 457938

In Touch:

Sue Waller 01444 455047

Lunch Fellowship:

Wednesday:

Sue Waller 01444 455047

Friday:

Anne Parker 01444 473519

Magazine Editor:

Val Cookney 01444 440029

The Fellowship:

Chris Comber 01444 482641

Stepping Stones:

Janet Goodenough 01444 417002

Transport (Car Czar):

Janet Drayton 01444 483621

Zest Co-ordinator:

Josh Thomas 07598 779553

Lighthouse (Junior church)

Co-ordinator:

Dawn Walters 01444 441601



the **Joy**
the **Hope**
the **Story**
the **Meaning**
the **Gift** fm 87.9

Unwrap the Gift
December 18th-25th

The 3 Churches in Lindfield will be celebrating the joy, sharing the hope, telling the story and unwrapping the meaning of Christmas with our very own radio station the Gift fm **broadcasting on 87.9 fm** and online at **www.thegiftfm.com**

Tune in for the sound track to your Christmas celebrations including live events, concerts, carols and services from Lindfield Schools & Churches

 **the Gift fm** ^{87.9}
unwrap the meaning of Christmas