GoodNEWS MAGAZINE **FREE MONTHLY** Lindfield United Reformed Church

Winter 2019/20





the Lord has come

Bible verse of the month

Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.

Luke 2:10 NIV









If you have a verse or article you would like to share in GoodNEWS email:

goodnews@lindfieldurc.org.uk



Editorial

We seem to have a very full and I hope interesting Winter Edition of Good News. This Good News covers December and January which takes us into the New Year 2020. It is good that we have all the wonder of Christmas before us. We have thought provoking articles which I feel sure you will enjoy reading. There is such good news regarding the Food Bank, so much being donated by everyone to such a worthy cause.

We have once again the delightful Christmas Concert to look forward to. Peter always brings so much joy to us all with his Carols along with the Perdido Players and Choir.

Christmas means so many different things to so many people, Danny and Ruth share what is important to them, as a family. Many memories are written about, together with a wonderful poem written by Dorothy Brown. How talented she is!

Boys' Brigade has a report on everything happening with their company. Read Martin and Helen's review about an evening spent with Lauren Daigle, a twenty eight year old Christian singer.

There is so much more in our Good News which we hope you will enjoy. Wishing you all a very Happy Peaceful Christmas and New Year from our Good News Team.

God Bless you all

Anne

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Please include your contact details in case of query

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Dear friends

f it's not raining, then the lawn at seven a.m., when I feed the dog, has a frosty whiteness. The air has a definite chill to it, leaves are leaving the trees bare, and each afternoon I seem to go, "Oh! Is it dark already?" Winter is definitely here.

For many the cold clear black sky nights might bring the need of a hot drink, a thicker woolly jumper, and some extra hours programmed on the central heating, but I also like to think of it allowing me to see an old friend, someone I have known from my youth, and who comes round each day but is easier for me to see in winter than summer. I talk of Orion, a bright constellation that looks a bit like an hour glass with three stars in line at the waist, like a belt. It doesn't matter where I have lived in the country from the Borders, to Renfrewshire, the Thames Valley to Manchester, and Northampton to Lindfield, this character has risen in the winter sky, easily identifiable and so a companion on chilly canvas camps in my youth, and late night dog walks as I've got older

Those astronomers and astrophysicists who devote their life to studying the movement and evolution of stars and planets might take their telescopes and study the nebulae contained within the constellation. Some might look to another intriguing aspect of its beauty, but I, to some extent, simply like its presence. Two thousand years ago in the near east, probably somewhere near present day Iran, there were star gazers who didn't have telescopes but yet had spent years becoming familiar with the patterns and periods of the celestial bodies. The time and date can be known with relative simple observations, and each year of stars has a familiar pattern, but these Magi observed something extra a star unseen before.

They could have considered it a bad omen, as did the English observers of Halley's comet in 1066, but a different understanding was discerned, not the death of an old king, but the birth of an important new king. What we now call the Star of Bethlehem, even though we don't know whether it was a star, comet, or conjunction of planets, became a guiding light to the wise men, eventually leading them to the Holy Land and a young Jesus.

May the time of Advent, Christmas, New Year, and the season of Epiphany, be a time of delight as we remember to seek for the Christ, and His kingdom.

Your minister

Keith

Family News Winifred Scopes

Winifred was called home to her Lord and Saviour on November 4th. Since her declining health she had been looking forward to that day, confident in where she was going and full of trust and hope in the Lord Jesus. All her life Winifred had walked with the Lord and served Him in various ways, many of them here at LURC.

She came into membership in October 1966 and, despite the limitations of her own health problems, Winifred was always caring towards others, giving lifts to Church and supportive to folk going through difficult times. For a number of years Winifred was the URC's representative and organiser for the annual Women's World Day of Prayer; a task she undertook sincerely and efficiently. Going back forty years or so, Winifred took part in the two Christian musicals this Church put on, "Spirit" and "The Witness", and she was always happy to take a part in drama, including during worship, or to lead the prayers.

In her younger years Winifred was part of the Wives Fellowship, and she worked hard during the time she was Chairman of the Afternoon Fellowship. Also, she made 'exceedingly good cakes' whenever the need arose for Church events. House Group was a regular commitment for her, and Church services, of course. All in all, Winifred was a real stalwart of the Church, there to support whatever was going on – a faithful servant of the Lord.

For me, dear Winifred was a friend of many years, and I for one will really miss her (as I know she will be missed by her loved ones and all in the Church Family.) Whenever I visited and prayed for her, she always prayed herself, giving thanks and praying for me and others. She showed great courage through difficult times, and was always quick to express her gratitude for the help and support she received, especially in the last few years.

It was lovely that her last time at the Church was for the Car Outing and Tea in September. How glad we were that she made that big effort to attend. Much loved and revered among us, it's been a real privilege to have known Winifred as a friend, one who blessed us all in so many ways.

Please uphold Andrew, Rosalind and Brian in your thoughts and prayers.

Fo Tingley

Family News

In Touch

We met in October for our Film evening when we saw" The Shack" produced from the book which some of us read several years ago in our Book Group.

Our next meeting will be on 26th November when we will be having our Christmas craft evening organised by Jenny, Pat and Jo.

We don't meet in December as it is such a busy month for everyone but we will be having a meal together in January. Please look out for details nearer the time.

As Sue is stepping down from leading In Touch at the end of this year we will be asking members to discuss our way forward in the future. Such as who may be prepared to lead or share leadership of the group and what sort of programme everyone would like for next year.

Please come to our next meeting with some ideas and suggestions or speak to Sue any time.

Everyone is welcome to come to our meetings.

Janet Wade

Thank You

n the autumn/winter months we have the privilege of opening the church to many visitors at Arts Festival, Bonfire Night and Village Night, as part of our contribution to village life. Each of these events requires many volunteers from the church community. We want to take this opportunity to thank each of them.

During the last year we have opened the church on Monday and Friday afternoons to welcome people to the church. As part of the open afternoons we started the food bank donation point and, in order to offer more flexibility to all the people who donate, we are now able to extend the food bank opening hours via the side doors of the church - see separate article. The main church will no longer be open on those afternoons and we thank the volunteers that were willing to act as welcomers over the last year.

Thank you The Outreach Team

Thank You

Carol and Stuart Marsh would like to thank all those who sent us cards and best wishes in October as we celebrated our Golden Wedding. They were all much appreciated – especially Dorothy's beautiful poem! Thank you.

Stuart and Carol Marsh

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Wednesday Worship

The Wednesday Worship service will be on the 4th December at 11.30am led by Keith Morrison, do please come and join this time of short time of praise and worship.

All are invited to attend.

Lunch Fellowship

A fter some years I am stepping down from heading the team who produce the lunch each 1st Wednesday of the month, it has been a pleasure to carry out this task with great help from the team without whom it could not happen, so many thanks to them all.

The good news is that Penny Fanner has taken over the reins and will continue in January. As the first Wednesday is New Year's day, lunch will be served on the 8th January instead. After that it will resume on the 1st Wednesday of the month at 12.30pm

Meanwhile the Christmas Lunch will be on the 4th December at 12.30pm as usual, please do come along, and if you are new contact Sue on 455047 to book your place.

Thank you Sue Gooch

The Fellowship

At the October Meeting we were given a very timely talk by Lindfield Bonfire Society. (There is an interesting article in this month's Lindfield Life – Do read it!).

There is no meeting in December. On Wednesday 22nd January at 2.30pm, our own minister Rev Keith Morrison, will be our speaker.

There will be the usual Bring and Buy stall and at the end of the meeting, a cup of tea and time to catch up with friends. All who come will be made most welcome.

Pat Phillips

Thank You

want to thank all the kind folk who have sent flowers and phone messages whilst I have been laid up. I'm being well cared for with the NHS.

May I take this opportunity for Tony and I to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New year.

Blessings and love from Margaret and Tony Stevens

Food Bank Collection Point

Extended Opening Hours

Due to popular demand and to make Dit more convenient to pop in and drop off items, from December 1st the opening hours will be extended. The Food Bank Collection Point will now be open Monday to Friday from 10am to 4-30pm except bank holidays.

Now with over 1333 items received we have been overwhelmed by your generous donations to the Food Bank throughout this year. On behalf of all those who receive these much needed gifts all year round and not just at Christmas we extend our thanks and wish you all real joy this Christmas

Penny Fanner



Shoebox Appeal

C hoe boxes bring joy, love and hope \mathbf{J} to children in need around the world. Trained church and community leaders assist in reaching out to children in more than 100 countries with the joy of a simple gift and share the Christmas story of Jesus.

Along with the shoe box gifts, children are also offered a Bible story booklet called 'The Greatest Gift', which tells them the story of God's greatest gift, His Son Jesus.

Thank you all so much for contributing to this appeal, whether it was filling a shoe box, sending a cheque or donating online. Altogether, with some from the Evangelical Free Church, we collected 75 boxes.

Lesley Sparks



It was a long time ago 2019 plus years

This article is from Norna Derham, a very special lady, who has been a member of our Church for a very long time. She has great wisdom and always finds the right words, when one needs guidance or simply encouragement. She moved from living alone in her home for a long time, into a caring home at Crossways, where she is now well looked after loved and cared for. In order to give Norna a very special view, from her window, a lovely green grass area was given to her. Here she was able to have her own special flock of lambs. Sheep have always been such a special a part of her life, and now it continues to be the same! Norna wrote this which I was so touched by. She always finds just the right thing to say! We all miss her at Church but we can still enjoy her wisdom!

Anne Elvin

We are approaching the remembering of a special evening when a group of men are camped around a little fire, trying to ward off the chill of the evening. Around them lie, stand or sleep, their flock of sheep. They all keep close together for company and protection. All is quiet, save for the gurgling of the herbivores diet or the bleat of a lamb who cannot find Mum.

The men are shepherds, a group not often accepted by society, and yet chosen, on this special night, to receive and pass on very special news, the coming of a Messiah. News as relevant today as it was a long time ago. As I look through my Crossways window, I see fake grass that has been lovingly put on the roof of a garage, which is home to my little flock! One of them has a solar panel which lights up after dark and ensures there is visibility whether there is dark or light. I am constantly reminded that the Messiah is God's sacrificed Son, my shepherd, who will never leave or forsake me.

What wonderful news to pass on.

What encouragement to have.

May the run up to Christmas be a 'Special News Time' with much happiness in our Shepherd's love and care.

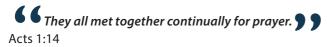
Norna Derham

'Did you think to pray?'

This is the title of a book on prayer by R. T. Kendall.

It made me wonder how many times we use prayer as a last resort after we have tried every other option for our problem. As Paul says in Philippians 4.6 "Don't worry about anything but pray about everything." If we have a regular daily prayer time we can spend time praising God, for who He is and what he has done for us, as well as bringing our concerns to Him.

As well as personal prayer, it is also good to spend time together in prayer as we bring the needs of the wider world and our country, with all its problems before the Lord. May we as a church, find like the early church, that our first thought is to meet together to praise and worship the Lord and seek His direction in all we do.



When anybody asks 'Did you think to pray?' may we be able to answer with a resounding "YES".

Opportunities to meet together for prayer are:-

Monday 9:30 - 10:30 am

4th Thursday 8:00 – 9:00 pm

in the lounge

Saturday 8:45 - 9:30 am

Three churches meet

Carol Walters



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Exciting Nights in Lindfield

As we waited for the Bonfire Society procession to pass down the High Street on route to the common, many were able to enjoy a free hot chocolate from Lindfield United Reformed Church. With over 1100 drinks dispensed this free gift continues to grow in popularity.

The LOVE LINDFIELD Community Collage created for Lindfield Arts Festival 2019 was again on display on the 5th November in the church concourse. As before it brought back memories from local residents and a great deal of interest from visitors to the torch light procession, bonfire and fireworks spectacular that took the time to view the collage. The collage now lives in the High Street with more on that at a later date. In the mean time you can see this community collaboration displayed in the church concourse on 3rd December for Lindfield Christmas Festival Night and at the big band and choir Traditional Christmas Carol Concert on 19th December.

Although it may initially have seemed daunting, those from the church that took time to talk with visitors to the church viewing the collage, found the experience fun and rewarding. It is after all good to talk and share with others who we are. Take the opportunity on the 3rd & 19th December.

lovelindfield.co.uk

Henderson McEwan



Traditional Christmas Concert 7:30pm Thursday December 19th

Yes, we call our annual concert, traditional, as we will sing at least six carols including Silent night and Ding dong merrily on high. However, there is much, much, more.

The Perdido Players "Carol" Band will as in previous years accompany the carols plus play big band Christmas music. The church choir will sing for us a variety of songs from secular and modern carols.

Guests visitors will entertain us with readings and music including vocals, saxophone quartet and some spontaneous items.

All participants are offering their services free to support the work of the St. Peter and St.James Hospice Community Nurses. The concert aims to end at 9:00pm after which tea and mince pies will be served. Doors open at 7:00pm, there is no charge for admission and if you so desire a donation to the above cause would be appreciated.

Why not enter into the spirit of Christmas in your best Christmas jumper and celebrate the wonder of Christmas with us. You would be most welcome.

Look out for the poster and invite others to this Christmas Concert.

Peter Swann

Leader Perdido Players Carol Band

Info: 01444 450335

A TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT LINDFIELD UNITED REFORMED CHURCH High Street Lindfield THURSDAY 19TH DECEMBER AT 7-30

It's Christmas!!!!

The first signs of it coming might go unnoticed, rather like how a green shoot of a spring chrocus bulb starts to appear, but then as day by day, week by week, and month by month passes it grows in colour as the world around us starts to talk, sing, and advertise the coming of Christmas.

The first sign that I spotted this year was not long after my children had returned to school. In the middle of Sainsbury's supermarket, without any fanfare or banners flying, a small number of mince pies and bowl shaped puddings appeared. I don't at the time see anyone filling their basket with them and maybe that is what allows them to reproduce like the tribbles in the original Star Trek series of the 1960s, innocent enough at first but then they grow in number until the entire store is taken over by merchandise aimed at the Christmas season, even though it was still only October.

This year I even spotted mince pies in one shop, mid-November, where the price was reduced as they were about to pass their best before date. Is this feast of food, feast of promised TV viewing, and the expensive toiletries, games and chocolate really what Christmas is about?



No! Yet at the same time I don't want to come across as Scrooge at the beginning of Dickens' a Christmas Carol, going "Bah! Humbug!" at the mere thought of festivities. What's more even that story ends with the man known for his miserly attitude coming to his senses and arriving at the door with the roast beast (or is that the Grinch).

Christmas is truly the celebration (the mass) of the birth of Jesus the Christ, who is the promised anointed one to rule God's people. It is this celebration which brings people together, families and friends to have a Holy –Day a time of blessing, and the gifts exchanged should rightly remind us of the great gift of God's own Son born in Bethlehem that the world may be reconciled to the Creator who has love for us even when we would disown Him. The humility of the event is astounding, a humble infant laid in a feeding trough being the King of kings.

This quiet entry into the world is not what people expected, they were thinking the promised one would be a mighty warlord to lead them into battle against their foes, but the greatest enemy we face is not a foreign country but how the evil one seeks to control our life, and so often succeeds. The Iona Community hymn writers John Bell and Graham Maule challenge us with their words... Who would think that what was needed To transform and save the earth Might not be a plan or army, Proud in purpose, proved in worth?

We needed not a battle proven soldier, but someone who would reveal God's Love for us, and his desire that we might be his and live his way.

The theme of reconciliation seems to be coming out in this year's TV adverts – be it in the two sisters heading to McDonald's, or Edgar the Dragon lighting the pudding in the Waitrose/John Lewis's offer. What we see is strained relationships brought close as people come together to mark Christmas.

How will you be marking the coming in to the earth of a saviour for humanity? Will at the forefront of your thoughts be the preparations of a family feast for Christmas Dinner and all the stress that might come from that, or instead will the reason for the festival, the sharing of God's Love to all, and the Peace He alone can bring be your focus?

Rev Keith Morrison

Christmas Letter

II I want for Christmas is my two front A teeth! At the October Synod Together meeting in October we said farewell to Revd Nicola Furley-Smith after 8 1/2 years as Moderator of Southern Synod. We wish her well as she takes up her new role as Secretaries to Ministries in the URC nationally. She has certainly left a gap in our lives and for now that gap is being filled by the two of us (Revd Bridget Banks and Revd George Watt) supported by Revd Paul Dean covering the Ecumenical work of the Synod. We hope that someone will be in post by the summer next year. Please pray that the right person would be found to permanently fill the gap.

But there is something endearing about the smile of someone missing their two front teeth! It makes you aware of the other teeth which are every bit as important as the front ones. And we would remind you that the Synod is also made up of the Office and Field Staff, the Ministers, Local Church Leaders, Elders and all the members and adherents of our local churches – all playing our part in the mission of the Church. Let us smile broadly and celebrate each other.

As Christians what we long for isn't shiny new incisors but more of God's kingdom. At Christmas we celebrate the coming of Christ to fill the gaps in our lives and in our world. He comes to bring light in our darkness, hope in our despair and peace in our troubled world. We are invited to come and gaze on the baby born in a humble stable. He was the one that had been longed for and wished for to rescue and to save.

But it wasn't a one-off event. Christ comes afresh to the present troubled world to bring light, hope and peace. At the time of writing this letter we are preparing for a General Election and politicians are promising how to cure the ills of the present world. Promises can sound very easy, the hard thing is making it a reality. We rejoice that God didn't just promise us that he would love us but he showed it in a very tangible way by sending Jesus into the world. As unbelievable as it may sound this was part of God 's plan to change hearts, minds and the whole world As John Bell & Graham Maule from Wild Goose put it:

Who would think that what was needed To transform and save the earth Might not be a plan or army, Proud in purpose, proved in worth? Who would think, despite derision, That a child should lead the way? God surprises earth with heaven, Coming here on Christmas Day.

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This is the Good News that we will be celebrating in our churches when there is so many challenges and so much uncertainty in our world today.

But we are also invited to join in with this work. We all have a part to play. At the recent LICC (London Institute of Contemporary Christianity) day we were encouraged to avoid saying 'I am just a...' as though we have no part in God's work. So, we should avoid thinking that we are just a florist, bin man, accountant, grandparent. We all have a part to play in filling the gaps in our world today. We can be the answer to our own prayers 'All I want is...' As we rejoice in God sending his Son into the world may we discover how he sends us to continue the work that he began.

We would like to wish all of you in local churches a happy and peaceful Christmas. And may you faithfully proclaim that Christ has been born amongst us bringing light in our darkness, hope where there is despair and peace where there is unrest.

God bless.

budget

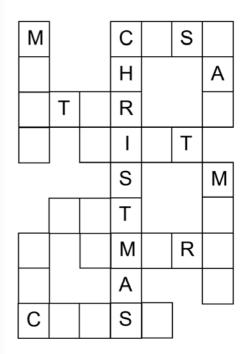
Rev Bridget Banks

Rev George Watt

Christmas Puzzle

See if you can fill in the blank squares using, for each word vertical or horizontal, just some of the letters of the word "Christmas". Good luck!!

You can check your solution with the answers on page 31



Christmas 2019

Is it that time now, will the bells ring? Are we now ready, carols to sing, Have we some presents, hidden away Do we hear faintly, the sound of a sleigh?

So much confusion surrounds us, it seems Calm and contentment? - only in dreams Talks of extinction - ice melting fast who can we turn to, will our world last?

As we rejoice in our dear Saviour's birth Glance down O Lord, to your people on earth Grant us thy peace, given freely to all Lord of all hopefulness - answer our call.



Sunday Services

The **10.00am** service is an opportunity for all age groups to join in a relaxed informal time. Most weeks, children leave after 20 minutes for their own activities (including crèche). Lighthouse (Junior church) is for children and young people up to age 14.

Coffee is served after the morning service.

Holy Communion (4th Sunday)

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

Holy Communion (2nd Sunday)

Personal prayer is available after every service. We can also offer personal prayer ministry at home or in hospital.

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

Recordings of services can be borrowed free from the church.

Prayer Meetings

Mon	9:30am	An Hour of Prayer
Thur	8:00pm	Church Prayer Evening 'Engine Room' (4th Thursday)
Sat	8:45am	Three Churches Prayer Meeting. Venue rotates between the three churches

Regular Activities

Mon	10:00am	Art Group
	6:00pm	Boys' Brigade - Anchor Boys (5-7 years)
	6:00pm	Boys' Brigade - Junior Section (8-11 years)
	7:00pm	Boys' Brigade – Company Section (11+ years)
Tue	10:00am	Stepping Stones (Parents and toddlers - term time)
	7:30pm	In Touch (4th Tues) for women of all ages
Wed	11:30am	Wednesday Worship
	2:30pm	(1st Wed) a midweek service The Fellowship (4th Wed) for men and women of all ages
Thur	8:00pm	Church Meeting (2nd Thursday, Alternate Months)
Fri	5:00pm	Rooted(Years 2-5)
	7:00pm	Pulse (Years 6–9) games, craft, tuck and a bible message (term time)

The church regularly opens midweek on Tuesday 10:00am –Noon

Dec	2111	ber Cn	urci		ary
1st Sunday	10:00am 6:30pm	Family Worship Dan McQuillin Something Different Adam Earle	19th Thursday	7:30pm	Traditional Carol Concert
3rd Tuesday	6:00pm	Village Night	22nd Sunday	10:00am 6:30pm	Rev Keith Morrison Carols by
4th Wednesday	11:30am	Wednesday Worship Rev Keith Morrison			Candlelight
	12:30pm	Lunch Fellowship Christmas Lunch	24th	4:00pm	Crib Service
7th Saturday	8:45am	Three Churches Prayer Meeting,	Tuesday Christmas Eve		
	All Saint	All Saints	25th	10:00am	Christmas Day Celebration
8th Sunday	10:00am 6:30pm	Family Worship Rev Keith Morrison Something Different Rev Keith Morrison	Wednesday Christmas Day		Rev Keith Morrison
		Nev Keith Monison	28th	8:45am	Three Churches
13th Friday	4:00pm	Messy Church	- Saturday		Prayer Meeting, All Saints
14th Saturday	8:45am	Three Churches Prayer Meeting, All Saints	29th Sunday	10:00am	Family Worship Rev Simon Franklin
15th Sunday	10:00am 6:30pm	Nativity Rev Keith Morrison Something Different Rev Keith Morrison			

December Church diary

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1st Wednesday New Years Day	10:00am ~noon	Church open for prayer	18th Saturday	8:45am	Three Churches Prayer Meeting, URC
4th Saturday	8:45am	Three Churches Prayer Meeting, URC	19th Sunday	10:00am 6:30pm	Family Worship TBC Something Different Rey Keith Morrison
5th	10:00am				
Sunday	6:30pm		22nd Wednesday	•	The Fellowship Elders Meeting
8th Wednesday		Wednesday Worship Rev Keith Morrison Lunch Fellowship	23rd Thursday	8:00pm	Church Prayer Meeting
9th Thursday	8:00pm	Church Meeting	25th Saturday	8:45am	Three Churches Prayer Meeting, URC
11th Saturday	8:45am	Three Churches Prayer Meeting, URC	26th Sunday	10:00am 6:30pm	Communion Rev Keith Morrison Something Different Rev Keith Morrison
12th Sunday	10:00am 6:30pm	Family Worship Rev Keith Morrison Communion Rev Keith Morrison	28th Tuesday	6:30pm	In Touch Meal Watch for details

16th Thursday House Groups

House



Holiday Club- February half term, Monday 17th – Friday 21st February 2020

The 2020 holiday club has moved to the February half term, so preparations are well under way. Our subject this year is being God's apprentice, and each day we will have a special message from Sir Archie Ficial Sweetner, our Chief Executive. The week will be for primary-school aged children. Posters and flyers will be available shortly. As ever we will need volunteers to help during the week, and help collecting resources for use during the week.

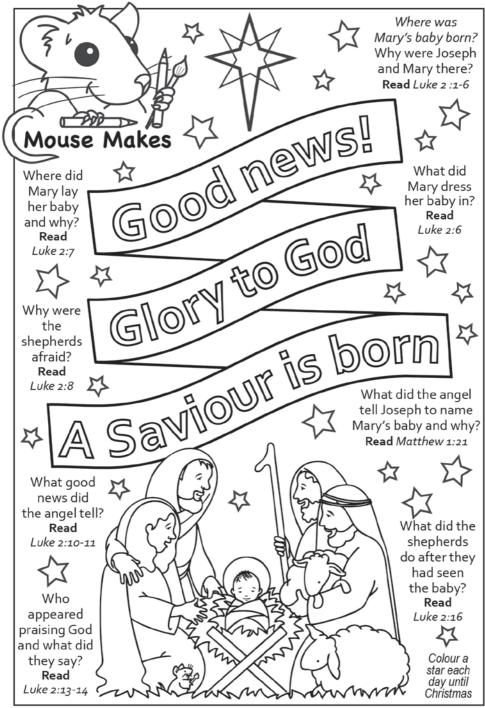
During the week we will need:

- Team leaders and helpers
- Craft team
- Refreshments and registration
 team
- We will also need some resources to use during the week:
- Kitchen roll centres
- Newspapers

Games team

If you can help in any way, or would like further information please speak to Danny, Dawn or Richard.

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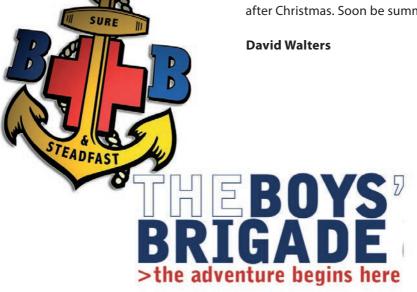
Boys' Brigade

We are now well into the new session with numbers growing to 17 across the Company. Numbers in the Anchor section are a bit low at present but this is not unusual in the early part of the session and numbers usually increase during the year with boys bringing their friends along.

We have a good packed programme each meeting following more detailed pre-session planning and with a new awards structure in the Junior Section. The meeting together of the Anchor and Junior Sections for their opening parade and some other activities has work very well. Our Enrolment Service was held back in October when all boys and staff committed themselves to the Company for the year ahead. It is also an opportunity for the church to confirm their support. We had good support from parents at this service.

The Juniors took part in the Battalion potted sports competition, a competition we won last year. This year of the ten teams entered we came third which was a good result as we had a young team.

The two new drummers in the Company section are progressing well and are now ready to play alongside our experienced drummers on occasions. We now look forward to the second half of the session after Christmas. Soon be summer!



Do you remember?

happened the hatever to Christmas Bazaar? Once in less complicated times, this was most churches' social highlight of the year. Come autumn. committees were formed and a date and theme decided. Word went round to every section of the Church to begin their preparations. The handymen sought to renovate the stalls. The women began to knit, sew, pickle and preserve. There were no arguments, we all knew our places and were content to work together over the next few months

Come the day, or firstly the evening before, there was a positive hive of activity within the hall. Stalls were decorated - a prize for the best one, of course. Everything except cakes etc., were set out. All was ready. In early days, a few stalwart men would stay overnight as protection. No phones of any sort then. I believe they had a whistle to blow, and hopefully alert a passing policeman in case of trouble. Next day, gueues formed outside before the opening ceremony, which was always performed by a local dignitary, (at my previous church in Friern Barnet North London in later days this was once performed by our then new local MP – by name Margaret Thatcher). This completed, buying and selling began! In addition, names of dolls, weight of cakes - number of sweets in a jar were guessed and gifts plucked from the Bran Tub.

Old friends visiting were warmly welcomed and refreshments consumed. The enormous fellowship of the church was greatly enhanced as everyone worked together.

At the end of the day, happily, exhausted after all the clearing up, we returned to our homes hoping for a good night's sleep before church the next day. Inevitably times and circumstances bring changes but for those who can remember – Oh Happy Days!

Dorothy Brown

Christmas Postbox

Collowing last month's article, this is just a gentle reminder that the last posting date for your cards is Friday, December 13th, and they will be available for collection on Sundays 15th and 22nd.

The proceeds will go to Turning Tides (formerly known as the Worthing Churches Homeless Project.)



Concert Review

On a night out in London on 13th November we found ourselves standing in the pouring rain, besides an overflowing rubbish bin in a dark alley in Shepherd's Bush, surrounded by a noisy hooded crowd. Had we accidentally wandered into a potentially dangerous situation? Fortunately no - we were instead part of a 2,000 strong group experiencing a tour of the lesser known sites of London that is part of the queuing strategy of the Shepherd's Bush Empire O2 arena! Within 45 minutes we were standing in the stalls listening to the talented Tom Tukker, the Dutch singer who was the warmup act for the person that everyone had come to see, Lauren Daigle, a 28-year old Christian singer from Louisiana, USA. Like a bride exercising her rights, Lauren made everyone wait a bit, but the wait was certainly worth it! She started with an up-tempo number about how Jesus is "still rolling stones", of the sort that would otherwise block graves: "I thought that I was too far gone for everything I've done wrong, yeah I'm the one who dug this grave; but You called my name, You called my name".



Image courtesy of John Williams Photography johnwilliamsphotography.co.uk



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Lauren's voice is husky yet silky smooth and she is often described as sounding like Adele. One of the many songs that really showed off her wonderful voice was "You say", which won Lauren a 2019 Grammy for Best Contemporary Christian Song: "You say I am loved when I can't feel a thing; You say I am strong when I think I am weak; You say I am held when I am falling short; when I don't belong You say I am yours; and I believe, I believe what You say of me, I believe". Her lyrics are full of meaning and clearly very inspirational and encouraging, reminding us of the power of Jesus in our lives – the words are wonderful Christian testimony and you can read many testimonials online of the positive effect they have for many people. We only had to look at the faces of those around us to see what the words meant

We heartily recommend her albums, "How can it be" (2015) and "Look up child" (2018), the most played music in our home at the moment! The title track from "How can it be" is such a strong reminder of the wonder and amazement we feel at the grace of God, freeing us from our sin: "I am guilty, ashamed of what I've done, what I've become. These hands are dirty, I dare not lift them up to the Holy one. You plead my cause, You right my wrongs. You break my chains, You overcome, You gave your life to give me mine. You say that I am free, how can it be, how can it be?" This message is mirrored in another song, "What have I done to deserve love like this: I cannot earn what You so feely give....Hallelujah!".

Lauren's backing singers and band were excellent – we have never seen such an accomplished trombone player; how could such a large man move so fast?! Near the end Lauren made the evening for one young fan by inviting her onto the stage to sing along with the band. One of my (Martin) favourite songs is the simple "Your wings" reminding us of one aspect of God's love for us, akin to that of a mother hen: "You're my covering, I'm safe, I'm safe, Whatever comes at me, I'm safe. I'm safe. You got me under Your wings, under Your wings". By coincidence, the Tecarta online Bible verse for the day before the concert was Psalm 36, 7: "How priceless is your unfailing love, O God! People take refuge in the shadow of Your wings" (NIV).

So, in summary it was a really wonderful night out, affirming that Christianity is alive and kicking amongst the young...and not so young. The evening was topped off by a chance encounter on the way out with local friends who had also had a great time. They had to rush off for a train but we were spoilt with the luxury of a night in London, only five minutes walk from the venue! Do try and catch the music of Lauren Daigle when you can, on album or live!

Helen and Martin Hall

Boxing Day On the Feast of Stephen

E veryone knows that it was on the feast of Stephen that 'good king Wenceslas looked on'. After all, it's in a Christmas carol – but why? There's nothing about Christmas in it: a splendid young page who rustled up some flesh, wine and logs, an old man out in the snow ('deep and crisp and even') and a kindly monarch. But Christmas?

The clue is in 'the feast of Stephen', which falls on 26th December, or 'Boxing Day', as we know it. That, too, has nothing to do with Christmas, beyond the fact that in the past people put a contribution in tradesmen's boxes as a kind of Christmas present for their services during the year.

The Stephen whose feast day falls on the day after Christmas was the first Christian martyr. (You can read his story in the book of Acts). He was a member of the church in Jerusalem in its very early days, and found himself involved with six others in administering the allocation of food to those in need. The apostles, who were the leaders of the church, felt that it wasn't appropriate for them to abandon preaching and 'serve tables', so they selected these seven to do the job for them. Stephen, however, quickly revealed hidden gifts as an eloquent spokesman for the Christian cause. The Temple authorities, who had already had trouble with the apostles, were soon alerted to this new and hitherto unknown evangelist. They decided to make an example of him, thus firing a warning shot, as it were, across the bows of the apostles themselves. So they arrested Stephen and accused him of speaking against the two central elements of their religion – the 'holy place' (the Temple) and 'the customs Moses handed down to us' (the Law). It's always dangerous to criticise a monument or a custom!

Given the right to defend himself, Stephen instead launched into an eloquent and at times biting account of Jewish history, culminating in the accusation that they had committed the worst possible sin by killing the Messiah. Inflamed by his words, his hearers abandoned any pretence of legal impartiality, rushing towards him and dragging him out of the city to a place where they began to stone him to death. Stephen, the rank and file Christian, died under a hail of rocks for claiming that Mary's Son was the promised Messiah.

That is most probably the reason why the first martyr is honoured on the day after we celebrate the birth of the Saviour It's a bit like the myrrh in the gifts of the Wise Men – a reminder, as we celebrate, that the bitter shadow of a cross is never far away from this story.

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FREE admission

Traditional Christmas Concert with the The Perdido Players "Carol" Big Band & Choir

Thursday 19th December at 7:30pm

Doors open 7:00pm The Concert will be followed by Tea and mince pies

Experience the Joy and celebrate the Wonder of Christmas

Lindfield United Reformed Church High Street, Lindfield

You are invited to support the work of St. Peter and St. James Hospice Community Nurses

THE LORD HAS COME

"Incarnation -We would see Jesus"

think it was our late minister, Norman Smith, who drew my attention to this text "Sir, we would see Jesus". I suppose, since the age of 8, when I joined cubs and Sunday school at St Andrews, Eastcote, my life has centred round the church. In fact it has been my life. But in over sixty years of ministry I have come to the conclusion that it's not the church people want, nor any of the trappings which go with it – but Jesus. And if they are not meeting him through us - the institution, we as individual Christians are not doing our job.

People have all sorts of pictures in their minds when we start talking about witnessing for Jesus, evangelism, which means sharing the good news. Maybe a door-to-door canvas, like the Jehovah's Witnesses, maybe an open-air service on the Common (no one mentions a soap box, but you can just see it in their minds' eye), maybe inviting some well-known evangelist to conduct a mission using the King Edward's Hall, Billy Graham style.



But wait a moment. What are we trying to do? Is mission a bit like a General Election, where everyone is going round trying to persuade the population to jump on this bandwagon or vote for that luminary? What is important – the party, the message, the candidate?

Surely, our role as Christians is to show people Jesus – to enable them to meet with him, to listen to him, to follow him, to give their lives to him. Yet he walked this earth 2000 years ago – how will they see Jesus?

Remember, when the children of Israel fled Egypt and were pursued by Pharoah's chariots and horsemen, the people cried out in their despair "Why didn't you leave us alone to serve the Egyptians – it would have been better than dying here in the wilderness!" They preferred captivity.

They say a number of the old lags go out and commit some pretty obvious petty crime in mid-December, so they can be sure to get locked up and enjoy Xmas in the familiar warmth & comradeship of the nick.

In a way, the human race seems to prefer slavery to freedom. We use the precious freedom God has given to reject God himself. We prefer somehow the security, the refuge of being prisoners to sin, to selfishness. It's comfortable, we like it – we don't have the will to break free or even to seek him who can break our bonds. So many people are like, say, a magnificent pipe organ, costing hundreds of thousands of pounds, which is only used in the interval at a football match – or a fabulous old master worth millions, hung in a storeroom.

This is just not what we have been created for – our purpose, our lives remain unfulfilled. All parents want the best for their children and our heavenly Father is no exception. He created us – he loves us – he wants us to be free from all that enslaves us.

My first trial sermon at Westminster College was on that marvellous passage in Hebrews 1 "In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son."

All down the ages God has tried to speak to his people. Think of all the prophets, priests and pastors he has sent. His will and purpose is clearly enshrined in his word, revealed in the scriptures of the old and new testaments. But, apart from a faithful few, the human race prefers the darkness to the light.

"But in these last days he has spoken to us by a son..."

"And the word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us..."

We frail, fallible human beings have ignored the pleading of the preachers, the cajoling of the prophets. We have been deaf to the call of God himself. Every attempt he has made to communicate with his family has been unnoticed and unheeded. We have gone our own sweet way.

So, in the end, God comes himself. Immanuel means "God with us". The message is no longer second hand. In Jesus Christ, God has spoken to his people in a language we cannot fail to comprehend. Jesus is the Word of God. In him we encounter the Father, not as some remote, divine manifestation, but humbly, quietly in our context, on our terms.

Today, in this season of Advent, we prepare once more to celebrate the Incarnation, the coming of God amongst us as saviour and friend. All through the years there has been controversy about exactly who Jesus is. Some tell us that Jesus is not really God. Others tell us that he was not really a human being. Certainly the fusion of man and God has always been a problem for many.

But if we truly believe that, despite all our sins and failures, we human beings have been created by God in his own image, there is surely no need to separate Christ's divinity from his humanity. His divinity stands out for all to see in his humanity. In Jesus we see revealed vividly, unmistakably, once and for all what life really is about, what being human really means. Because of all our human failings and weaknesses, we are but pale reflections of the God in whose image we were created. But because of Jesus, we now know something of God's true love for us and how we are created to live in harmony with him and our fellow beings in his family.

OK – then Jesus is the model, the pattern, the example – the final standard of what it means to be a person, shaped in God's own image.

But Jesus was incarnate two thousand years ago. People are still saying "Sir, we would see Jesus". How? Where is he?

Could it not just be that that is our job, weak and inadequate though we feel? Jesus knew full well that he wasn't going to be around in the flesh for ever. Isn't that why he told his disciples to "Go therefore to all nations and make them my disciples, baptise them, teach them to observe all that I have commanded you. And I will be with you to the very end of time." (Mtt 28:19 & 20)

Paul tells Christians in places like Corinth "You are God's temple, where the Spirit of God dwells" (I Cor 3:16). He loves to use the picture of the church as the body of Christ. "Now you are Christ's body and each of you a limb or organ of it." (I Cor 12:27)

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When Jesus was here he went round healing the sick, comforting the sad, feeding the hungry, forgiving people's sins and proclaiming to them the Good News. Now he's not here to do that – we are his body, called to carry on his work. "We are therefore Christ's ambassadors" says Paul. "It is as if God were appealing to you through us..." (II Cor 5:20)

What wonderful images these are – but how daunting. Paul was good at expressing these things & challenging us to follow. "I have been crucified with Christ", he tells us. "It is no longer I who live, but Christ, who lives in me."

If people are going to see Jesus today, it is going to be through you and me. Our job as Christians is to "be his body" – to carry on his work and ministry in his name and in the faith that he is with us every step of the way.

I for one know I am not up to it! All my adult life I have been trying to be a disciple, to follow Jesus, to do his bidding as best I can. But boy, don't I know my limitations!

One of the problems with us Christians, particularly those of us who live in the old Christian world of Europe and North America, is to think it is all on our shoulders. We suffer from an enormous spiritual inferiority complex "Lord, I'm not good enough, I'm too young or too old – I will not know what to say". But it's not up to us. Our calling is to be faithful, to follow Jesus, to trust him to use us to reflect something of his peace and joy and saving love out into the world round us.

That's why we don't really have to go door knocking or standing on soap boxes or holding great rallies. People surround us in everyday life. This church, every church, has a fringe of people constantly in touch. All we have to do is be faithful – to be Jesus by caring for them – by loving them as he has loved us – by telling them and living out before them what Jesus means to us.

At Advent we are reminded again that God came at Christmas – he has revealed himself to us all through his incarnation in Jesus Christ. All we are called to be is his faithful followers – to walk with him along life's road, to keep in touch with him through the scriptures and our prayers, to try to live out his life and reflect his love to those around us, with whom we brush shoulders every day.

When people say to us "Sir, we would see Jesus", let us never forget that we are his body, his ambassadors – now he is making his appeal through us. However inadequately, they must meet Jesus in you and in me. Happy Christmas!

Refer 2 Peter 3:8-15a/Hebrews 1:1-6

Rev Michael Davies

Mission Update



REGISTERED CHARITY No: 1027832

mission focus for ur December 2019 continues with Turnina Tides. а community led homelessness charity that puts clients and local people at the heart of their mission to end homelessness. homelessness Although is often highlighted at Christmas, Turning Tides will not only be working hard this Christmas but throughout the whole vear to support those who are experiencing homelessness or in danger of becoming homeless. You can find out more about the organisation from the website (www. turning-tides.org.uk), including projects, fundraising and volunteering opportunities. At LURC we are delighted to be welcoming John Holmstrom, CEO of Turning Tides, and Karen Gordon, Mid Sussex Outreach Worker, on the morning of Sunday, 8 December 2019. when we look forward to learning more about this work.

The following table gives you an idea of the work and achievements of Turning Tides 2018-19:

OVERVIEW 2018-19



On any one night 169 men and women were accommodated in Turning Tides' housing.

2,028 men and women were supported by Turning Tides' services throughout the year.





266 men and women were accommodated in Turning Tides' housing over the year.

485 men and women accessed the Breakfast clubs in Worthing, Littlehampton and Horsham.

All achievements have been made possible by the commitment, and generosity of our supporters, volunteers, clients, staff and the communities in which we work



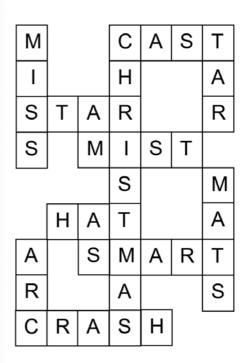
were delighted to welcome Kenneth Harrod of Release International for our Mission Weekend held on 19 & 20 October. On the Saturday evening we saw the film of the book "Tortured for Christ" followed by a Q&A time. The film is based on the extraordinary story of Pastor Richard Wurmbrand who was imprisoned for his faith for 14 years in communist Romania and who provided the inspiration to found Release International in 1968 On the Sunday Kenneth preached at the Morning Service and, after the Service, gave a talk to share more about the work of Release International. We then had a mission lunch of delicious food and good fellowship. Hearing news of our persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ is always very humbling and inspirational. The weekend left us with much to think about. A heartfelt thank you to all who supported the weekend's events in any way.

Missions Group Helen Hall

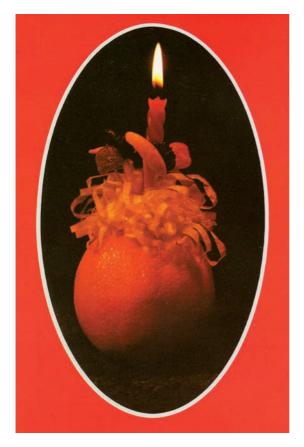
Christmas Puzzle Solution

On Page 10 we asked you to see if you could fill in the blank squares using, for each word vertical or horizontal, just some of the letters of the word "Christmas".

Here is our solution!



Christingle Custom



The custom of Christingles began in the Moravian Congregation of Marienborn (in Germany) on 20th December, 1747, at a children's service conducted by John de Watteville. After singing hymns together the Minister read some verses which the children themselves had written "in honour of the Saviour's birth", and he then went on to explain to them, in a way which made the story fresh and lively, what happiness had come to men from the birth of Jesus, "who has kindled in each little heart a flame which keeps ever burning to their joy and our happiness". To make the point even clearer each child then received a little lighted wax candle with a red ribbon. John de Watteville ended the service with this prayer: "Lord Jesus, kindle a flame in these dear children's hearts, that theirs like Thine become". The Marienborn Diary concludes, "hereupon the children went full of joy with their little lighted candles to their rooms and so went glad and happy to bed".

The symbolism gradually developed and today in the Moravian Church the Christingle consists of an orange representing the world, with a candle lit to represent Christ, the Light of the World. The candle is held in a goose quill, the upper part of which is split into branches on which are impaled nuts, raisins and sweets. These stand for the created order over which Christ is King and for God's bounty and goodness to us in providing the fruits of the earth.

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The Christingle service is held on Christmas Eve. Essentially it is a children's celebration in which the child is placed in the midst of all that is done, just as the Christ-child is at the centre of the Festival. At the climax of the service of readings, recitations and carols, each child receives a lighted candle in the darkened church and in this magical moment, as the children process round the Church, the visual symbol tells the truth of the Christmas story - that in the darkness of the world there has shined a great light.

The service ends with the traditional Moravian carol:

Morning Star, O cheering sight, Ere thou cam'st how dark earth's night. Jesus mine, In me shine, Fill my heart with light divine.

Rev Rosieta Burton



What Christmas means to me

Ruth:

This year I have really enjoyed introducing the Nativity Story to Josie, our 18-month daughter. As we turn the pages, she points out different characters and she even likes to sing when she sees an angel! I often find the Christmas story becomes very familiar, but it has been great to watch Josie discover it for the first time.

Danny:

Christmas is always a very busy time for me, but there is one thing I look forward to each year. On Christmas eve, after the Crib Service, we drive to my parent's house in Worthing and on the journey, I always like to listen to Chris Rea's 'Driving Home for Christmas'.

If I was to use one word to describe Christmas, it would be 'home'. Home because I love spending time with my family; and home because Jesus came at Christmas to make a way for us to reconnect with God and come home.

Ruth & Danny Goodall

Who am I? Revealed - Jane Harfield



Well done to those of you who managed to work out from the clues in November's "Who Am I" article that the regular questions we ask our "victims" had been answered that month by Jane Harfield. Although you might not suspect from her accent that Jane was born in Gosforth, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, I don't think I am giving away too many secrets by saying that after ten years "up north" Jane has had her accent ground down over the last 50 years in the deep south! Yes, it was Jane's 60th Birthday earlier this year and many of the congregation enjoyed the celebrations at Haywards Heath Golf Club.

It must have been quite a challenge when Jane joined St Joseph's school in Haywards Heath at the age of ten and, as is common with children who stand out in some way, was teased for her Geordie accent. However, quite soon Jane moved on to Oathall for her secondary schooling. There she first met several of the ladies in our congregation and one of her memories is of Helen, as a prefect, directing her in the lunchtime breaks!

All Saints was the Lindfield church where Jane first worshipped, with her mother, sister and brothers, but in her late teens she drifted away from organised religion. It was almost ten years later, when Jane and Tim became engaged, that she came back to church, attending a "Know Jesus, Know Life" event at Lindfield URC; and they have been attending ever since with their family, Trudy, Johanna, Alex and Kieran. Of course, for just over a year they also attended with their second daughter, Fionna, until her untimely death. Jane told me that Norman and the whole church were a tremendous support to her and her family throughout that time and since.

With her busy job in medical records and as a grandmother to two young boys Jane does not have much spare time. However, she has been a valuable member of the Pulse team on a Friday evening for many years and she also enjoys singing with the worship group on a Sunday morning. If you don't know Jane well, do take the opportunity to meet with her over drinks after church and find out more about the Harfield family and why Jane is such a fan of rhubarb, rhubarb!

Martin Hall

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Flower Rota

	Arranging	D
Decer	nber 2019	
1st	Jenny Machell	H
8th	Plant	Fi
15th	Plant	N
22nd	Christmas Flowers	N
29th	Christmas Flowers	N
Janua	ry 2020	
5th	Carol Marsh	C
12th	Doreen Fowler	Jc
19th	Leslie Sparks	lri
26th	Mary Comber	Aı
Febru	ary 2020	
2nd	Sally Ross Clark	Н
9th	Carol Marsh	Fi
16th	Jessie Green	Ca
23rd		Jc

Distributing

Heather Swann Fiona Tingley No Delivery No Delivery No Delivery

Carol Marsh Jo Bloxham Iris Bingham Anne Elvin

Heather Swann Fiona Tingley Carol Marsh Jo Bloxham

Around Lindfield

Tuesday 3rd December

6:00pm Lindfield Christmas Festival Night

Friday 6th December

7:00pm Lindfield Horticultural Society in King Edward Hall Christmas Social Supper and Entertainment

Wednesday 11th December

12:15pm Tiger Arts - Lunch in the Tiger1:00pm Concert in All Saints : Lindfield Handbell Ringers

Thursday 19th December

7:30pm Traditional Christmas Concert - Perdido Players Carol "Big Band" & Choir, Lindfield United Reformed Church

Wednesday 8th January

12:15pm Tiger Arts - Lunch in the Tiger
1:00pm Concert in All Saints : Wimbledon Ukulele Band
8:00pm Lindfield Horticultural Society in King Edward Hall Talk "The Perils of Gardening" by Andrew Harding

Thursday 23rd January

7:30pm

Village Film Night in King Edward Hall "Judy" (12A) starring Rene Zellweger Tickets available from Tufnells from 28th December



www.lindfieldurc.org.uk