

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

SATURDAY, 3rd DECEMBER, 10am–1.30pm: Christmas Bazaar at St Bede's

SUNDAY, 4th DECEMBER, 6pm at the URC: last in the popular series of 'What is...?' Looking at faith and the Church, the Bible and where God is in all this. Come along and join in the discussion and ask questions! Anything you have ever wanted to ask- in a welcoming and inclusive environment.

SUNDAY, 11th DECEMBER, 4pm at the Parish Church: Christingle service

MONDAY, 12th DECEMBER, 7.15pm: Healing Perspectives at St Luke's

THURSDAY, 15 DECEMBER, 7.30pm: St Mary's Church, Bletchley MK3 6BJ, Festival of Christmas music and carols with Andante

FRIDAY, 16th DECEMBER, 7.30pm at Lovat Hall: U3A Christmas concert

SATURDAY, 17th DECEMBER: 'Family Nativity Event' on Newport Pagnell High Street, starting at 10am and finishing with carols and refreshments at the URC from 11.15-11.30am.

For up-to-date information on events and activities check our website regularly at

www.ctnp.org.uk

A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL

CTNP President: Vacancy

Secretary: Chris Row, chris.row@which.net

Tel. 01908 611542

Treasurer: Paul Tolley, PTMERCEDES@aol.com

Tel. 01908 615729

CTNP website: - www.ctnp.org.uk



CONNECTIONS

December 2016

Almighty God, as your kingdom dawns, turn us from the darkness of sin to the light of holiness, that we may be ready to meet you in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen



FAMILY NATIVITY EVENT

SATURDAY 17TH DECEMBER
On Newport Pagnell High Street from
10.00am – 11.30am

At Christmas, baby Jesus was born, but who else was there as well?

If you search along Newport Pagnell High Street you will find the other folk who were around in Bethlehem at the time.

They'll stamp the trail map you can pick up at your first stop.

Make your way to the stable where Mary and Joseph, and a donkey, will be waiting – there will be refreshments and concluding carols 11.15am-11.30am.

Spread the word! And come and join in the fun!

Articles to the Editor, Beth MacKay

Preferably by e-mail to beth.mackay@yahoo.co.uk 01908 612475

Copy Deadline - 20th of each month

FROM A MINISTER

THE DAWN OF SALVATION deals with the shadow of death.

The long wait is over, we are ready to begin,
Celebrating Christmas, now is the time to sing.
As like minds gather `round
The season we will usher in
Joining Mary and wise men and saints by the million

With “Glory” and “Praise God” and “Hallelujahs” thrown in
No words can do justice to this plan to end sin.
God’s feelings triumphant now grow human skin.
Such humble beginnings we cannot ignore
Amid high jinks from shepherds and prophecies galore.

Such a long night but it’s over, salvation has dawned
We wake to a baby, a new era is spawned.
God’s excitement is mirrored
In Angels who chorus
See for yourself the saviour who’s for us.

This day in your heart you can meet him afresh
No quibbles, no small print, no matter the mess.
Just speak up and welcome
The designer who calls
He’s waiting and patient and his love is for all.

Revd Jack Walker, Newport Pagnell Baptist Church

Christmas Bazaar at St Bede’s

SATURDAY, 3rd DECEMBER

10am – 1.30pm

Bottle stall, book stall, refreshments and much more!

**All proceeds to Macmillan Nursing
and**

Hampers for the needy of Newport Pagnell

U3A CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Come and enjoy a Christmas Concert given by the U3A Choir on **Friday, 16th December at 7.30pm in the Lovat Hall**, Newport Pagnell. (Please note change of venue).

Tickets available on 07762178379, from members of the Choir or from Jennifer Mazzone (01908 613088) at £7 each to include seasonal refreshments.

There will also be a raffle. Proceeds for a local charity.
We look forward to seeing you.

EXPLORING CHRISTIAN HEALING NEXT MEETING

Monday 12th December

7.15pm-9.15pm

St Luke's, Wolverton Road, Newport Pagnell MK16 8JQ

REQUEST FOR HELP FOR LENT LUNCHESES 2017

Lent Lunches 2017 to raise money for Christian Aid will take place at the URC Hall for six weeks from Friday 3rd March – Friday 7th April. Offers of assistance for this CTNP annual event are requested from ALL the churches in Newport Pagnell and from anyone in our community who has 2 hours to spare on a Friday, even if it is only for one Friday during the 6 weeks.

Time involved would be from 11.30am – 1.45pm. Tasks include, setting up and laying tables, stirring soup, making tea/coffee, serving tables, washing up, tidying the hall at the end of the session. This may sound like hard work, but working together as a team is enjoyable, and for such a good cause!

Please contact Jennifer Mazzone 01908613088 to let her know if/when you are able to give your time, and/or contribute homemade soup, one or more Friday lunchtime.

Thank you!

Jennifer Mazzone

St Mary's Church, Bletchley MK3 6BJ
7.30pm, Thursday, 15 December 2016



Andante presents

*A Festival of Christmas Music
and Carols*

with audience participation

Ticket Price: £10, accompanied children free
Seasonal refreshments included

Tickets available from:

Margaret Whiteley - 01908 670226

Roger Hall - 01908 612292 &

Sam Muthuveloe - 01908 668829

Proceeds to improve the lives of children in Sri Lanka



Registered charity 327898 www.hopeoutreach.org.uk

CHRISTINGLE



SUNDAY 11TH DECEMBER
NEWPORT PAGNELL PARISH CHURCH
at 4.00pm

Christingle celebrations are named after the Christingles that are lit during the service. At our version in Newport Pagnell Parish Church, everyone assembles their own Christingle using an orange, red ribbon, sweets and a candle which are all provided. Each piece of the Christingle holds special symbolism to help children understand the importance of Jesus; the lit candle represents Jesus as the light of the world.

Because Christingle was specifically created with children in mind, the celebrations are the perfect event to take children along to, and can be enjoyed by people of all ages. As families stand in a circle, with the Christingle candles all lit, it is a time of wonder and awe and a lovely way to begin your Christmas celebrations.

SHEPHERD'S STORY

written by Revd Jack Walker, Newport Pagnell Baptist Church

I suppose you want another of Grandad's stories Anna. No not the one about the wolf that attacked three sheep and I had to kill with a knife before it got me. No, no, no more songs that we shepherds sang to each other. I get into trouble with your mother over those. I have a story I never told you before. I have saved it till you were a little older. I didn't want you to think me barmy. And I didn't think it important until now.

It was just an ordinary night. I was quite a young man then. The night was long, but somehow us shepherds would talk most of the night away. How we worked the next day I'll never know. I couldn't do that now - no, I'd fall asleep in the day never mind the night now. This night an angel appeared. Don't look at me like that. It happened. This is why I didn't tell you before. I was scared. I mean scared like I have never been before or since. All four of us hit the deck. How that was going to help I don't know but we did. It just seemed the safest thing to do.

Then the angel said, 'Don't be worried.' It was a bit late for that, even the night the sheep thieves came seemed tame compared with this. I have often wondered what the angel looked like, all I can say was it was strange but I just knew it was an angel. It was as if I had met thousands before. We were all the same, we knew this was an angel. Then the angel told us about a baby. Not just any old baby - but the birth of the Messiah, the deliverer. But the story did not really add up. The idea that God would want to speak to shepherds took some believing. Then the fact that this special baby was lying in a feeding trough in town stretched our imagination further.

But what clinched the argument was when the rest turned up. 100s of them, actually more like 1000s of them, I don't know maybe it was millions of them, Angels singing. When I say singing, you have never heard singing like it. It was, it was, it was just like the angels, indescribable. Then, they vanished. No goodbye, just went. We looked at each other. It seemed like an age, but then Ben said we had better go and see. Now if we had been thinking straight we would have thought 2 o'clock in the morning is not the time to go rummaging around Bethlehem to try and find a baby. We just did not think. When we got to the town we did not know what to do but we saw a light in Zepheniah's place and thought at least someone's up.

We hit the jackpot. There was the baby. We told the parents, who were strangers to town, what had happened. What surprised me was they did not seem too surprised. Somehow when we saw the baby, it was a thrilling moment just like when you were born, Anna. It was strange, I mean we were strangers, no they were the strangers but it didn't matter. We were all happy.

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Suddenly we remembered the sheep. Isaac would have us stoned if any were missing. I could see us trying to explain, 'You see, Isaac, there were these angels...'. We walked back singing at the top of our voices. It took a long time to live it down. My mum was convinced we had all been drinking again. Some of the neighbours complained about being woken at night. And somehow it was hard to say 'don't blame us, blame the angels'. So I kept quiet after that. In fact I have kept so quiet about it that over the years I almost wondered did it happen. Was I drunk? But deep down I knew it was true.

It must have all been more than thirty years ago, about the time of that stupid Roman Census. Yes that's right, that's what brought the strangers into town. I wish I could remember their names. I couldn't even remember the baby's name. But last week, at the Passover it all came back to me. You must have heard all the fuss about Jesus. You know, the one the priests have told us to have nothing to do with. I have always trusted their advice. When it comes to following God they are the people in the know, And the idea of God working through some northerner took some believing anyway. I just took it that the priests are right. Well, last Friday I was hurrying back to be ready for the Sabbath. I passed the rubbish tip.

The Romans were doing the usual crucifixions. I was annoyed that there was such a crowd in the way. There was this woman in the crowd. Why I looked I don't know. I was quite surprised to see priests there. I heard someone say that Jesus was the guy in the middle. I thought, ah they have got the little trouble maker at last. But the woman. The moment I saw her I recognised her. She was crying. My heart stopped. She was the mother of the baby. I wanted to shout out, 'this is all some terrible mistake'. But I was speechless. Tears welled up in my eyes. Some men in the crowd turned on me. 'Old man' they said, 'Don't cry over Jesus, not if you want to live to cry again'. There was a noise, in between gasps for air, Jesus said, 'Father forgive them for they don't know what they're doing'. That finished me. I ran, well as near to run as I can these days.

Anna, I don't understand it all. I can't explain it all. But you need to know I think it really matters.

