

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**Friday, 20th December @ 7:30pm in the URC Church**, Newport Pagnell. Come and enjoy a Christmas Concert given by the U3A Choir. Tickets available on Jennifer Mazzone 07762178379 or from members of the Choir at £6 each. Seasonal refreshments will be served. There will also be a raffle.

### **HOLIDAY CLUB 11<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> August 2014**

This year we are using Scripture Unions Rocky's Plaice material (yes it is spelt like that!) This fish shop backdrop should generate plenty of humour:-Why are fish so smart?. They are always in schools!! Moving swiftly on we are planning and praying for 150 primary school age children and are busy recruiting the team. The bible content centres on the life of Peter. Join up and have great fun with the kids and the team. If you are inexperienced – do not worry, we will provide some training and support. You will not be thrown to the Sharks! You can let us know your interest via [Info@npbc.org.uk](mailto:Info@npbc.org.uk). Don't miss out! 16 and 1 **Our next planning meeting is on Jan 15<sup>th</sup> 8pm at Newport Pagnell Baptist**, i.e. Lovat Hall. All welcome.

### **MEMORY CLUB – Meets 1<sup>ST</sup> Wed of the Month**

**Memory Cafe** a safe place where people who suffer from Dementia and their carers meet others and share experiences. **1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of every month at Westbury Grange, Westbury Lane, Newport Pagnell £1.50 per person** includes hot drink, cake and a raffle. For more information contact Westbury Grange 01908 210332

### **BRIDGEBUILDER ANNUAL BARN DANCE**

**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> November @ 7:15pm – Lovat Hall, Silver Street, Newport Pagnell.** To buy your tickets - £10 each (no concessions) - cost includes food in the interval. Choose from fish & chips, chicken & chips, sausage & chips or veggie burger & chips. Bring your own drinks & glasses. Contact Gill at the following email address: [office@mkbt.org.uk](mailto:office@mkbt.org.uk)

**CTNP Chairperson:** Vacancy

**Secretary:** Beth MacKay, [beth.mackay@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:beth.mackay@yahoo.co.uk)

Tel. 612475

**Treasurer:** Paul Tolley, [PTMERCEDES@aol.com](mailto:PTMERCEDES@aol.com)

Tel. 210048

**CTNP web-site: - [www.ctnp.org.uk](http://www.ctnp.org.uk)**



## CONNECTIONS DECEMBER 2013

*Isaiah 9:6 for to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

### **NEWPORT PAGNELL – OPEN AIR CAROLS**

**SATURDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 11AM AT MARKET HILL**



**Mike and Moyra at The Dolphin Public House are putting on free Tea & Coffee after the Service with an option to make a donation to Willen Hospice**

**SEE INSIDE FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF CHRISTMAS SERVICES THROUGHOUT THE TOWN**

**Articles to the Editor, David Huckle**

Preferably by e-mail to [davidhuckle@me.com](mailto:davidhuckle@me.com) Tel. 217429

**Copy Deadline - 15th of each month**

## **LETTER FROM A MINISTER**

A friend of mine has recently undergone surgery to remove cataracts from his eyes. The operations were successful and he is amazed and delighted at how much more he is able to see and he is surprised at how even the most familiar things such as pictures in his home are clearer and how he is able to pick out the detail in the pictures. My friend had been aware that his eyesight had been getting worse but only now does he realise just how bad it had got and how much he was missing. I wonder if we have suffered in a similar way with regard to Christmas. Has this time of year with all his frantic activity – buying presents, writing and sending cards, arranging visits and the many other tasks – and the associated worries and tensions blurred or obscured our vision of what it is we are celebrating? Has the story of the birth of Jesus become so familiar that we have lost sight of the details and so fail to appreciate what God has done for us?

I would invite you to focus on detail of the Christmas story – the visit of the Angels to the shepherds and ask yourself what was it that prompted the Angels to visit the shepherds. To me, the answer is that God had done something so amazing that the Angels felt compelled to spread the good news. It was something so wonderful that the Angels felt that not only Heaven but Earth as well should resound with the praise of God. God who had created everything in Heaven and on Earth had put aside his glory, power and majesty and become a helpless baby, born in a cattle shelter and he had done this so that He could redeem mankind.

I hope that during this season, we may be able to put aside those things that cloud our sight so that we, like the angels may really appreciate what God has done for us by becoming one of us. I hope that we will be able to remember and focus on the fact that Christmas begins with Christ and so that with joy we may be able to echo that angelic hymn of praise – Glory to God in the highest and on Earth, peace to people of good will. Happy Christmas

*Deacon Jon Walls, St Bede's*

## **THE TRANSFORMING ENCOUNTER WITH CHRIST**

Hello everyone!

As some of you may be aware, I've just spent an extended period of time away from active parish life. It has been a lovely opportunity to have a good holiday, to rest and re-charge the batteries! It has actually provided me with an opportunity to read a book! It is but one of a number of biographies to have come out after the election of Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio, the archbishop of Buenos Aires, Argentina as the 266<sup>th</sup> Pope of the Catholic Church. It was a very readable book providing not only an insight into Pope Francis but also the events leading up to the election conclave.

Within this biography are numerous examples of addresses, homilies and his writings. I would like to simply share one "snapshot": "Everything in our life, today just as in Jesus' time, begins with an encounter. An encounter with this Man, the carpenter of Nazareth, a man like all men and yet different. The first ones, John, Andrew and Simon, felt themselves to be looked at into their very depths, read in their inmost being, and in them sprang forth a surprise, a wonder that instantly made them feel bound to him, made to feel different."

The (then future) pope went on to say: "Jesus is encountered, just as 2000 years ago, in a human presence, the Church, the company of those whom he assimilates to himself, the sign and sacrament of his Presence." Now, we may be able to "prove" God's existence through reasoned argument or the force of persuasion, but it will not bear fruit unless you and I open our hearts to this encounter of Jesus in our lives. This is the Christian calling: to bear witness to this encounter of Jesus - in my life and in your life. This is the Mission of being church that is at the very heart of "Churches Together in Newport Pagnell". This is the calling of every Christian in our world. To go and give witness to that encounter. Let us pray for that constantly renewing and transforming encounter with Jesus in our lives, and in the lives of those around us.

*Father James St Bede's*

## **MK FOODBANK LATEST NEWS**

### **Christmas is coming...**

To try and give Foodbank customers a slightly happier Christmas we are asking for donations of Christmas 'goodies' as well as the usual food and drink. All non-perishable festive items are welcome such as puddings, mince pies, sweets, biscuits, chocolate etc - all the things you would usually buy at Christmas, but no alcohol, of course! Perhaps you might like to consider making a collection at your workplace or anywhere you meet regularly with others? I am happy to collect if you cannot deliver yourself and also to come and speak if you need help in doing so.

### **Financial Support**

If you would like to make a financial offering to the Foodbank, then details of how to do so are on their website: [mkfoodbank.org.uk](http://mkfoodbank.org.uk), via the 'Donate Now' button. You can find lots of information about the work we do there as well.

### **Urgent Need**

From our usual list there is a particular shortage of **Long-life juice and milk and also tinned fish, fruit and rice pudding**. However, any donations are particularly welcome at what is our busiest time of year.

**Current Totals: 8,488 parcels have already been issued in 2013 and, alas, we expect to easily beat our last year's total of 9,034.**

Thank You to all who have helped the poorest people in Milton Keynes.

*"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat" Matthew 25:35*

*Have a blessed Christmas - Geoff Morris*

## **SEARCH FOR NEW CTNP CHAIR - CONTINUES**

The search for a new Chairperson continues as no nominations were received at the Forum on 20 June. Please think prayerfully about whether this is a role you might consider taking on for the next two years or, if there is someone in your congregation you think would make a good Chairperson, why not talk to them about it and encourage them to think about it. In the meantime, it will be business as usual for CTNP as the Executive and working groups continue with ongoing and planned activities. – *Beth Mackay*

## **CTNP EVENT – GET IN THE PICTURE – 30<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER – NEWPORT LIGHTS**

Get in the Picture is an ecumenical, evangelistic project which seeks to involve all kinds of people in the Christmas story, encouraging them to participate and experience playing a part in the nativity in a fun way.

The aim is to offer a free gift of a photograph to remind people of the Christmas story. This will be done by ...

1. Working together as churches in Newport Pagnell to create a nativity scene, which will be one of the stalls taking part in Turning on of the Christmas Lights event on the High Street on 30<sup>th</sup> November.
- 2.
3. Inviting individuals and families to 'get in the picture' and have their photo taken as part of the nativity scene (dressed up etc).
4. Uploading the photo to the Get in the Picture website for them to print or email to friends and family, free of charge.
5. Helping people to connect further with the Christmas story through the website – which includes local Christmas service times, a reading of the Christmas story from the bible and video clips of what Christmas means to people today.

Volunteers are needed to help with both the preparation for this event and on the day. We will need:

- Straw bales to set the scene
- Nativity dressing up clothes (on loan for just that day)
- Props, e.g. Kings, gifts, cuddly lambs...
- Photographers, with digital cameras to capture the moments,
- People to encourage passers-by to 'Get in the Picture'.

Please contact Sarah Wall, Youth Worker at Newport Pagnell Baptist Church, if you would like to get involved or can help in any way: tel: 01908 618898 or email: [swall23@live.co.uk](mailto:swall23@live.co.uk)

For more information visit: [www.getinthepicture.org.uk](http://www.getinthepicture.org.uk).

## **CHRISTMAS SERVICES**

### **St Peter & St Paul's Parish Church**

Sun 1<sup>st</sup> Dec @ 9:30am - Toy & Gift Family Service  
Sun 1<sup>st</sup> Dec @ 6pm - Advent Service  
Sun 15<sup>th</sup> Dec @ 4pm – Christingle Service  
Sun 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec @ 6pm – Christmas Carols  
Tue 24<sup>th</sup> Dec Christmas Eve @ 5pm – Crib Service  
Tue 24<sup>th</sup> Dec Christmas Eve @ 11:30pm – Midnight Mass  
Wed 25<sup>th</sup> Dec Christmas Day @ 09:30am - Sung Eucharist

### **St Luke's, Wolverton Road, Newport Pagnell**

Sun 1<sup>st</sup> Dec @ 11am – Toy & Gift Family Service  
Wed 25<sup>th</sup> Dec @ 11am – Eucharist

### **Methodist Church, High Street Newport Pagnell**

Sun 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec @ 6pm - Joint carol service with URC  
Mon 23<sup>rd</sup> Dec @ 7:30pm - Blue Christmas Reflective Service  
Tue 24<sup>th</sup> Dec @ 23:30 - With Christmas Eve Communion @ URC  
Wed 25<sup>th</sup> Dec @ 10:30 - Christmas Day Service with URC

### **St Bede's High Street Newport Pagnell**

Tue 24<sup>th</sup> Dec @ 4:30pm – Children's Mass  
Tue 24<sup>th</sup> Dec @ 8pm – Christmas Virgil Mass  
Wed 25<sup>th</sup> Dec @ 10am – Christmas Day Mass

## **CHRISTMAS SERVICES**

### **United Reformed Church, High St Newport Pagnell**

Sun 1<sup>st</sup> Dec @ 10:30 – Gifts for Children & Food Bank  
Sun 8<sup>th</sup> Dec @ 09:30 - Family Cafe Style Worship  
Sun 8<sup>th</sup> Dec @ 10:30 - Morning Worship  
Su 15<sup>th</sup> Dec @ 10:30 - Morning Worship led by Congregation  
Thur 19<sup>th</sup> Dec @ 09:30 - Toddler Praise Nativity  
Thur 19<sup>th</sup> Dec @ 3pm - Woman's Own Candlelight Service  
Sun 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec @ 10:30 - Morning Worship followed by Christmas Party  
Sun 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec @ 6pm - Joint carol service with Methodist Church @ URC  
Tue 24<sup>th</sup> Dec @ 4pm - Crib Service  
Wed 25<sup>th</sup> Dec @ 10:30 - Christmas Day Service with Methodist Church @ URC

### **Baptist Church, Silver Street Newport Pagnell**

Sun 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec @ 10:20 - Sunday Service - The Perfect Christmas  
Sun 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec @ 7pm - All Age Community Carol Service  
Wed 25<sup>th</sup> Dec @ 10:30 - Christmas Day Service followed by Christmas Meal

## **THANK YOU – RNLI COFFEE MORNING**

Thank you to all who supported the RNLI coffee morning with Linda & Geoff Morris. The amount raised was an amazing £505.07. Please look on [rnlmk.wordpress.com](http://rnlmk.wordpress.com) for more information about the MK Lifeboats group. Thank you. - *Linda Morris*