

CONTACT

CHRIST CHURCH HALTON
COLTON METHODIST CHURCH

December/January 23/24



Edward's Letter

Greetings in the precious name of Jesus Christ the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. I'm writing just a hours after the breaking news of the rescue of 41 workers who were trapped in a collapsed tunnel in the District of Uttarakhand in India and remarkably rescued.

Families, friends and colleagues were restless, sleepless, praying and waiting for news that they have been rescued. Numerous professionals including tunnel experts Arnold Dix and Chris Cooper were involved in the rescue efforts. After 17 days the workers emerged from the tunnel amid jubilation.

The ancient Israelites were waiting too, for liberating news. During the reign of King Ahaz the Lord had promised through the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel" (Isaiah 7: 14). Hundreds of years later they were still waiting for that event which would liberate them to happen, - the birth of the Messiah.

I don't know what your current situation is as you read this, but most of us spend some part of our lives waiting for liberating news, for a time when something will change. It may be release from ill health, finishing off the mortgage, etc. It is so easy wishing our lives away, waiting for the news that we hope will liberate us from some aspect of our current lives.

The best news and the most liberating as we approach another Christmas, was brought over 700 years after the promise to King Ahaz when the angel visited Mary to announce the fulfilment of that liberating news in the birth of Jesus. Jesus himself confirmed that in the first recorded words of his adult life, in Mark 1:15, "The time has come. The Kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe in the good news." Later, the apostle Paul emphasised it when writing to the church in Corinth, "I tell you now is the time of God's favour, now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2).

What are we waiting for? No change in our life can bring greater liberation than to spend today trusting in Jesus Christ. As we celebrate another Christmas, let's not wish our lives away for something that may or may not happen, and may or may not change our lives. Rather let's celebrate by following Jesus today. Also, as we say goodbye to 2023 and welcome 2024, may we look forward with great expectation, no matter in what circumstances we presently are.

*MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR
Your Servant in God's Vineyard, Edward*



Colton Christmas Fair

A very big THANK YOU to all who helped in any way with the Christmas Fair at Colton. Your time and help were very much appreciated. It was a great team effort and a lovely atmosphere. We have had so very many positive comments about the day and event. The amount raised for Church funds will be in excess of £1,000. Just a few extra thanks:

To all who donated gifts for the raffle, to our Scouting group for all the chocolate donations for the tombola, and to our Beavers who manned the tombola stall so well with their leaders (we promise to get a better ticket box next year!) and Rainbows and Brownies who provided and supervised children's games.

To our wonderful bakers for all cake donations the table was heaving! We actually ran out of cakes having to resort to emergency supplies! Sharon and Sue were kept super busy and manned the stall so well.

To Wendy for the lovely Christmas cake made for our 'Guess the Weight' stall, the winner was ecstatic!

To all our local craft people who had stalls, thank you for your invaluable contributions, and to Growing Zone for the plant donations. We hope you enjoyed the day.

To Ali and our new kitchen volunteer Kathryn who did an admirable job serving refreshments.

To Keith and Alison for all the washing drying up, and to those who strolled in and picked up a tea towel to assist.

To Gary who wore so many different hats during the day, your help 'stepping in' was invaluable and Geoff, in his hi-vis jacket manning the cold car park, he deserved is hot cuppa.

To Dorothy, Lynette and Hannah, for manning the extremely busy raffle, hope your wrists have recovered. [continued...]

Colton Christmas Fair (continued)

To all folk from the church who helped on the various stalls and to Frank for his wonderful snow scene train layout. Magical!

To the 5 members of the Wakefield Orchestra Wind Band (WOW) for providing once again the live Christmas music.

Finally, Kathryn and her trusty clipboard for all the planning and risk assessment stuff and David and Alison for attending to all the financial stuff.

Well done – see you all next year!

Christ Church Table-Top Sale

Who needs the January sales? Our regular table-top sale returns in January, on Saturday 20th to be precise. We look forward to welcoming you.

Christmas Shoe-Boxes

A huge thank-you to everyone who picked up a shoe-box and filled it with Christmas gifts. Thanks too to anyone who made a monetary donation to help fill more boxes. Sue Guy tells us that over 100 boxes will be sent to Meeting Point Café to be distributed to needy families in Harehills and the other areas served by Meeting Point. It will be another difficult Christmas for many families and children, so your generous gifts will be especially gratefully received, and hopefully generate a few extra smiles on Christmas Day morning.



“Youth” (shared by Peter Grubb)

“Youth is not a time of life, it is a state of mind; it is not a matter of rosy cheeks, red lips and supple knees; it is a matter of the will, a quality of the imagination, a vigour of the imagination; it is the freshness of deep springs of life.

Youth means a temperamental predominance of courage over timidity of the appetite, for adventure over the love of ease. This often exists in a man of eighty more than a boy of twenty. Nobody grows old merely by a number of years. We grow old by deserting our ideals.

Years may wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul. Worry, fear, self-distrust bows the heart and turns the spirit back to dust.

Whether sixty or sixteen, there is in every human being's heart the lure of wonder, the unfailing childlike appetite of what's next, and the joy of the game of living. In the centre of your heart there is a wireless station; so long as it receives messages of beauty, hope, cheer, courage and power from men and from the infinite, so long are you young.

When the aerials are down, and your spirit is covered with snow of cynicism and the ice of pessimism, then you are grown old, even at twenty, but as long as your aerials are up, to catch the waves of optimism, there is hope you may die young even at 100.”



Colton Christmas Card

Junior Church are busy making a large Christmas card to display at Colton Church from early December. You are invited to write your greetings to everyone at Colton Church, then make a

donation to the charity Save the Children. Thank you to the Junior Church leaders and children for organising this for us.

Happy Birthday!

Belated birthday wishes to Sharon, Maureen Hobbs, Jenny, Margaret Wilson and Amelie (7) and all who celebrated their special days in November. Happy birthday to Norma, Peter Grubb, Sue Keighley and to all who celebrate their special days in December. Birthday wishes to Amanda and Joyce for 1st January and to Bob later in the month.

Carols in the Courtyard



with 'Concordia'

Sunday 10th December

2.30 – 3 pm

Temple Newsam Courtyard

All welcome to come and join the singing



Concordia is a singing group made up of members from local churches

Christmas Eve Nativity

Our ever-popular “DIY Nativity” service returns on Christmas Eve at 3pm. It’s a short service for all ages, where there is a part for everyone, no rehearsal required! Dressing up is optional, but heartily recommended! We’ll tell



the famous story together and sing some Christmas favourites around the crib, a great way to really set the Christmas atmosphere. Come and join us to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas. The church is usually very full, but we always squeeze everyone in, so spread the word and bring your friends.



It's a Wonderful Life: Pause for Thought at Advent

A time for reflection, based on, and inspired by the film, *It's a Wonderful Life*, led by members of the Leeds URC Partnership ministry team. Over four weeks, we will come together and watch key scenes of the film alongside reflecting on our own relationships with God.

Even if you missed the first session, you're welcome to join the rest – we'll get together every Wednesday during Advent, either at 2:00pm, Christ Church Halton, or at 7:30pm, on Zoom.
(<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7019277749>)

It's not compulsory but if you would find it helpful, the book that the course is based on is available to buy here:
<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Live-Again-Journey-Christmas-Wonderful/dp/0232533296>

For more information, please email Nicola:
revnicola.robinson@gmail.com

Christmas by Pauline Hardman

Christmas is the season,
Jesus is the reason,
Love is the meaning of it all.
But do we stop to think,
Of that lowly Bethlehem stall,
When we rush around buying presents,
For one and all.
Let's celebrate his birthday,

With peace, love and care.
Join hands with one another,
The earth's good things to share.
Let's be humble and wise,
Like the shepherds and kings.
Then all the angels in heaven,
Will have reason to sing.
For Christmas is the season,
Jesus is the reason.
Love is the meaning of it all.

Blue Christmas Service

A gentle, reflective service for anyone who finds this time of year difficult, who misses someone, or who wants to spend some time remembering.

Thursday 14 December
7:30pm
on Zoom
Meeting ID: 7019277749



at Colton Church

Just a reminder about worship at Colton over Advent and Christmas (and apologies for muddling up some days of the week in the last edition!):

Christingle Service Tuesday 12th December 6pm to 7pm

Organised by Colton Guiding groups, this is an open invitation to anyone who would like to come along and share in this special annual event, followed by refreshments.

Carol Service Sunday 17th December at 4pm

This will be all age worship, held at Colton, led by our minister Revd Becki Stennett. Followed, of course, by refreshments! **Please note this will be our only service that day – there won't be worship at church in the morning.**

Christmas Eve Sunday 24th December

Worship as normal at 10.30am.

Christmas Day Service at Colton Monday 25th December at 9.30am

A short all age worship service starting at **9.30am**, to share in this special day together. Led by our minister Revd Becki Stennett.

New Year's Eve Sunday 31st December

Worship at Home – no service at church this day.

*Advent: "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light" –
Isaiah 9:2*

*Christmas: "Thank God for his gift that word's can't describe" –
2 Corinthians 9:15*

*New Year: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has
come: The old has gone, the new is here!" – 2 Corinthians 5:17*

Christ Church Guild Update

We're nearing the end of our current programme and it is pleasing to know that despite the wet weather over past weeks, our numbers have been maintained.

The Guild Weekend was very successful with a concert by the Skelmanthorpe Male Voice Choir on the Saturday, at which £387.00 was raised for the Window Fund. The choir enjoyed it too – they suggested that it might become an annual event! Perhaps it was influenced by the tea they were served afterwards.

The Rev'd Ron Hicks conducted an excellent service on the Sunday. He and his wife have always been strongly involved with the Guild movement and interestingly, both were brought up in this circuit, attending Newbourne and

Gipton churches respectively. The weekend concluded with a dinner at the Garforth Golf Club, which came up to the usual expectations.

Here is what's coming up (please note the change of plan on 12 December):

Dec. 5th – Impressions of China: Retired lecturer, John Hollingworth recounts his findings during two visits to this fascinating country.

Dec. 12th – Christmas Pudding Flavoured Entertainment: The Lidgett Park Drama Group entertain us. This will take place in the church, which will be heated.

Dec. 19th – Once in Royal David's City: Rev'd Edward Sakwe pays a welcome visit to lead our Carol Service this year. This comes with an invitation to all members of the church and indeed friends at Colton if they able to join us to begin the celebration of Christmas.

2nd January – 7pm - New Year Supper: A return to the story-telling supper idea with seasonal tales and a fish and chip supper. Please note early start and please see Sheila to book your place.

9th January – Fulfilling a Boyhood Ambition: Dennis Brighton shares how he achieved his boyhood dream of visiting Macchu Pichu.

16th January – A Right Royal Connection: Ann Lightman returns to talk about The Princess of Wales links to Leeds.

23rd January – An inside view of the National trust: Joanne Hudson tells us about her work which is based at Nostell Priory.

30th January – 10 Years a Volunteer: Barbara Tate tells of her involvement with the Trussell Trust, from the initial meetings to being a trustee and deputy chairman.

The A.R. Nativity Trail

Whether you're at Colton or Christ Church, see if you can find the 5 sheep posters displayed around the building, and take part in the Nativity Trail. If your smartphone can scan the QR code you can find out about services over

Advent & Christmas and you may be able to see a Nativity Scene projected on the world around you! Usually you just need to open your camera, point it at the code and a website link will appear on screen for you to click. Good luck!

Join the community for carols in Manston Park on Saturday 23rd December 6.30pm – 7pm. Community singing followed by mulled wine and mince pies, organised by Connecting Crossgates.
Please bring a torch or lantern.

Dates For Your Diary @ Colton

Monday 15th January – discussion at 7.30pm to finalise our response to the Circuit Leadership Team on the Circuit Strategy discussion paper “The Way Ahead”.

Saturday 20th January – Colton Church New Year Party. See separate item for more information about this.

Tuesday 6th February – Church Council 7.30pm.



Free and Carols Christ Church



Saturday morning, 16th December, as part of our Christmas celebration. Along with our favourite Christmas carols and hymns, your refreshments will be sent to Macmillan Cancer Care. The festivities take place between 10am and 11.30am.

Christ Church Messy Church

December's festive Messy Church will be held on **Saturday 9 December between 2 and 4pm**, and it will be a Christingle-themed. Come and learn about this traditional Christmas decoration, make one, and join in with the usual mix of fun, crafts, games, music, stories, worship, food and drink. Hopefully we'll be able to light our Christingle candles for part of our worship. All ages are very welcome, 0 to 100 and beyond. **In January, we'll be**

getting together on Saturday 13th, so come and shake off the January blues. As a reminder, we operate on a "Pay As You Feel Able" basis, with a suggested £1 minimum per child. Also, if you can let us know in advance that you'll be coming, either via Facebook, or by calling Sue on 264 7037, it would be a great help with catering.

A New Year Party at Colton Church

Saturday 20th January 2024 3pm to 5pm



Shake off the post-Christmas blues with a time of celebration at Colton. There will be games and entertainment for all ages, along with a faith supper (just bring along a contribution of food to share).

Please speak to one of the church stewards if you'd like to help with the entertainment or just come along and join in the fun!

A Carpenter's Legacy

Taken from "Musings Of A Wayward Pilgrim" by Mark Zenick; printed here with the author's kind permission.

The centuries have seen theologians, church officials and laymen debate and debunk the notion that the carpenter, Jesus of Nazareth, was the perfect embodiment of the divine in human form. "Perfect" meaning the absence of all sin, immune to the frailties and foibles which mark us all as members of a broken human race. These dogmatic arguments, often heated and contentious, seem to me to miss the essential point of Jesus's place in the unfolding of human history. For if nothing else this Jesus for

more than three decades lived as a man of sinew and flesh in a dusty land exhorting his brothers and sisters to discover new life beyond the temptations of anger, selfishness and despair. Even if only a small portion of the stories of his life on earth were poignantly true, then Jesus clearly called, and is calling, all of us to be larger and better than we can imagine ourselves becoming, through the compelling example of his own days on this earth. Whether as a human being Jesus was, or was not, perfect may be beside the point. This charismatic carpenter moved among us to tell, show and impress upon us the truth that divinity rests however dormant within each and every one of us.

Colton - Save the Date!

The WOW (Wakefield Orchestral Wind Band) will be appearing at Colton Church on Saturday February 24th between 2pm and 4pm. Further details to follow.

Christmas Crackers!



Q: Who hides in the bakery at Christmas?

A: A mince spy!

Q: What do you get if you eat Christmas decorations?

A: Tinsellitis!

Q: What carol do they sing in the desert?

A: O Camel Ye Faithful!



Forthcoming Services at Christ Church

3 December 10.30 Rev Angela Hughes
4.00 Churches Together Advent Service

10 December Rev Edward Sakwe
Holy Communion

17 December Rev Nicola Robinson



Christmas Eve	10.30 Mr Peter Howdle 3.00 DIY Nativity Service for all ages
Christmas Day	Rev Nicola Robinson
31 December	Worship Team
7 January	Mr Steven Jones
14 January	Rev Edward Sakwe Covenant Service & Holy Communion
21 January	Miss Mary Patchett
28 January	Rev Nicola Robinson

Christmas Eve Holy Communion

Whilst there is no Holy Communion at Christ Church or Colton on the evening of Christmas Eve, Rev Becki Stennett will be leading a communion service at Cross Gates Methodist Church, starting at 11.30pm. All are very welcome.

3 December	Rev Becki Stennett All-age worship, parade and toy service
10 December	Mrs Naomi Polson
17 December	4.00pm Carol Service led by Rev Becki Stennett

Christmas Eve Rev Joyce Nicholson
Holy Communion

Christmas Day 9.30am Rev Becki Stennett
All-age worship

31 December No service at Colton

7 January Mrs Janice Green
All-age worship



14 January Rev Becki Stennett
Covenant Service

21 January Mr Steven Jones

28 January Rev Joyce Nicholson

“Contact” Deadline

Please let Andy have any articles or contributions for February’s

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12-22-2014

WHAT DO YOU BUY THE GUY WHO HAS