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# STOKE ST GREGORY BAPTIST CHURCH NEWS DECEMBER 2017

Therefore the Lord himself  
will give you a sign:

The virgin will conceive  
and give birth to a son,  
and will call him Immanuel



#### OUR VERSE FOR 2017

*Together, we are God's house, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord.'*

*Ephesians 2:20 - 21*

Moderator: Rev Peter Morgan

Secretarial Responsibility: Alison Katte 07812 094157

Dear Friends,

The decorative lights, the Christmas trees, the annual letters from distant friends and the familiar carols – these are all enjoyable aspects of Christmas that I look forward to every year. However the numerous ways we are encouraged to spend so much money from Black Friday onwards in this season really challenges me and makes me think about whether there are better ways to be ‘doing Christmas’.

The Christian church has had a period of preparation for Christmas, called Advent, since at least the fifth century, and it is good to make it part of our preparations too. The word ‘Advent’ means ‘an important coming’ and leads us towards the celebrating of the birth of Jesus Christ that happened more than 2000 years ago. It has always been more than a time of practical preparation for that special day. It is also the opportunity to reflect on why God sent his Son into the world and what it means to us today. Through taking the time to read through the scriptures, looking at the prophecies that foretell the event in the Old Testament, and all the extraordinary events surrounding the birth in

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the New Testament, we are reminded that Christmas marks a day that truly did make a difference to our world and to our individual lives. You can find Advent study guides on the internet and in book shops. I am pleased to be getting to know more about Stoke St Gregory Baptist Church as its Moderator as we seek God’s plans for its future together. It is a church that welcomes its community and I hope you will enjoy celebrating Christmas at the special events being planned there.



Wishing you a blessed Advent and Christmas season,

*Peter*

Revd Peter

## Mary's Meals

Every day Mary's Meals gives out over one billion meals to hungry children so they can go to school. But there are still over 61 million



children who do not go to school, chronic hunger and poverty the main cause.

Mary's Meals' newest venture is

a school feeding programme in war torn Aleppo. How wonderful it must be for the children of Syria to have some degree of normality.

Every little bit helps. Most of us are unable to go to foreign parts to help in worthwhile projects, but we can give something to help others less fortunate than ourselves.

Many of us collect small change and/or make special donations at Christmastide. Mary's Meals is such a worthwhile cause I urge you to consider donating to this charity. The very good news is that every gift pledged to Mary's Meals before the end of 2017 will be matched by three amazing donors, up to a total of £1.9 million. Isn't God great!!!

You can donate on line <https://www.marysmeals.org.uk/donate> by post - cheques, made payable to Mary's Meals, Craig Lodge, Dalmally, Argyll, PA33 1AR or by phone 01838 200605 or 0800 698 1212. God bless you all.

## Mission Direct Cambodia

As I write Tony is working with a Mission Direct team in Cambodia building a floating school for the Vietnamese Boat children.

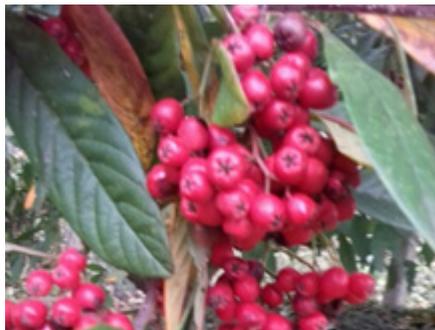


These children are not acknowledged by the government and are given no access to education. The basic structure of the school, huge bundles of floating bamboo, has been engineered by local workmen and the team are spending two weeks erecting walls, roof, painting etc to provide this much needed facility.

Tony has really appreciated your prayers and emails. The Mission Direct 2018/19 programme is now available. Contact Tony if you are interested in being part of team.... you don't have to have building skills!

Gill

Tony has also been working with MD in India and we look forward to hearing him on 10th December when he will be leading worship



## December Flowers

3rd Dianne Callaghan  
10th Sue Hembrow  
17th Christmas Flowers  
24th Christmas Flowers  
31st Paddy Scott  
Jan 7th Joan Thatcher

## For Our Prayers:

John and Karen Barnes,  
Mike and Kathy Davidson,  
Louise & Adrian Grinter,  
Charlotte, Matt, Laura & Hannah,  
Jonathan & Karen Stannard,  
Eleanor, Toby and Mattie,  
Baptists Together

We are happy to hear that Jan's recovery is on track, no doubt helped along having Mary over from New Zealand, comfort for Colin and David too. Jan thanks all for our prayers.

While other friends of our church family are also well on the way to recovery and feeling much better following surgery or a medical procedure, we know there are folk who have on-going health concerns.

We give thanks for the healing and continue to pray for all who are facing uncertainty and those who love and care for them.

We are sorry to learn of the death of Ben, son of Tim and Sue Luxton. Our love and prayers are with Tim and Sue and family.

## CHARITY LUNCH

Annette says thanks.

So far this year the lunches have raised £1374.99 for a wide variety of charities which is marvellous. The November Charity Lunch was the last for 2017 and is still to be added to the total. I am hoping that we can do even better next year, so do please get in touch with me to tell me which charity you would like to give a lunch for and when.

Thank you, Annette 490297

## Parish Poppy Collection 2017

Totalled £2330 + some gift aid - approx £ 2400. This is a wonderful response from our community. Richard Dobson would like to thank everyone who worked so hard to make this year's collection an outstanding success.

Sunday 11th November 2018 marks the 100th anniversary of the end of WW1. More poppy sellers will be required as this is a very significant year. Do get involved, if you can.

Contact Richard 07929193906.

## Stan Chedzoy

What a joy it was to welcome so many people to our church to celebrate the life of someone who had been active in our village and in the wider farming community. His



father had been the treasurer of the church and Stan also supported us. He was a member of the Playing Fields committee and is seen here at the dedication of the memorial stone in 2005.

He was a member of the Drainage Boards and was knowledgeable about the systems that maintain the delicate balance of the Levels and Moors. Later on he joined the Rotary Club and was a keen Bridge Player.

## Congratulations

Sue Hembrow has been presented with a Chairman's Award for Service to the community by the Chairman of Somerset County Council. Sue was nominated by the Parish Council for her contribution to our community informal, low profile and unsung ways. Sue has consistently taken responsibility where others have not been inclined and done

so for the well-being of others over many years.

**CAMEO** - 4th December at 2.30 in the Chapel. Come and relax for the afternoon as we watch Paddington Bear and then enjoy a Christmas tea. There will be no charge but any donation towards Marys Meals would be appreciated.

In January we plan the programme for the year. This year the meal will be at Holly Farm on Thursday 18 January -- and Liz and her team have kindly offered to cook for us. There will be a charge of £5 per head and we would like names, if possible, to Paddy or Mary. Please come with suggestions for the programme. We look forward to seeing you.

## David Howell

We were very sad to hear of the death of David Howell after a long illness. Those of us familiar with CAMEO events will remember talks by David. He had an infectious enthusiasm as well as a great knowledge of his subjects. We looked at churches and towns such as Sidmouth with a lot of hidden history. He encouraged us to look up and see afresh things that we so easily could have missed. We remember him with gratitude and thanks for the time he so generously gave to us and we send our love to Elsie.

## Christmas Services and events:

### Junior Church Presentation

will be on 17th December, followed by

### Christmas Lunch

This year's lunch will be bring and share and all are welcome.

There will be no morning service on 24th December.

In the evening we will celebrate **Christingle** starting at 6.00pm, Followed by mulled wine and mince pies.



You are invited to join folk from Church and Chapel for the village Carol Singing in the Square Wednesday 20 December at 6.30

Father Christmas may join us

**On 31st December** there will be a service of **Quiet Meditation and Prayer.**

Please don't forget to sign the **Church Christmas Card**, it will be on the Prayer table until 10th December. Donations are invited for BMS World Mission.

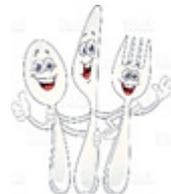
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**On Sunday 7th January** there will be a short communion service starting at 9.30am.

**Home Study Group** with Ralph and Mary : a short advent course on 29th November at 3.00pm, looking at "Giving and Getting" led by Tim. Please come and join us, even if you don't usually come to this group.

There will be a break over Christmas, starting again on 10th January.



## Luncheon Club Christmas Lunch

On Wednesday 13th December. Followed by carols and worship.

Luncheon club starts again in the New Year on January 10th. If you would like to come please ring Alison 490380 or Liz 490828.

## Vision Meeting

By the time you read this we will have had our first meeting to discuss the direction that the Baptist church should take. The last eight years with Barbara and Bill have been an eventful, fruitful time and we wish to carry on being a witness for God in the Village of Stoke St Gregory and surrounding area. I hope that we have all been thinking and praying so that we will know what is right for us to do next.

We want to make sure that we choose our next minister wisely. We will try to get views and opinions from as many people as possible, but we must not forget that as Christians we are called to do what we think God wants us to do. Please keep the Deacons in your prayers during the next few months.

*Jamie Marriott*

**Quiet Day**, Sat 6 January,  
10am to 4pm at St Rita's Retreat  
and Conference Centre, Honiton

The speaker is Revd Gerry Reilly on the subject of 'Silence, the path into prayer'. Full details from Revd Elsie Howell: revshowell@gmail.com

## From the Treasurer

I've found the pastoral vacancy has proved to be a good topic of conversation with members of our community. People are genuinely interested in finding out the latest update on our search for a new minister, and are often surprised to learn that all the costs associated with running the chapel, including the minister's stipend, come exclusively from our members, supporters and activities. This gives me a great opportunity to explain God's goodness and faithfulness in providing for us, and the reason we ourselves give away 10% of the financial gifts we receive.

In our financial plan for 2017 we had budgeted to spend just short of £50,000, and expected to receive £41,500. With Barbara moving on to a new calling, we are likely to under spend that budget while we are hopeful of meeting the income target. We continue to be grateful to all those who give so generously to the chapel, and pray the money may be used to glorify God.

Our giving is a powerful testament, and one that doesn't go unnoticed in this materialistic world. Let us continue to dedicate ourselves to live our lives as followers of Jesus.

*Niall Waters-Fuller*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>
Sun 3	10.00 10.30	Church open for prayer Family Worship with communion with Lesley Perry
Mon 4	2.15	CAMEO – film and tea in the church
Wed 6	3.00 7.30	Home group with Mary and Ralph 442123 Deacons' meeting
Thur 7	8.30 9.15	Prayer time TWiGs in the schoolroom
Sat 9	8.30 9.00	Prayer time Who Let the Dads Out?in the schooroom
Sun 10	10.00 10.30	Church open for Prayer Family worship with Tony Yaskin
Mon 11	9.00-5	Church open for prayer all day
Wed 13	12.00	Luncheon Club Christmas lunch
Thur 14	8.30 9.15	Prayer Time TWiGs in the schoolroom
Fri 15	6.00	Willowset Nativity service
Sun 17	10.00 10.30 12.30	Church open for Prayer Junior Church presentation followed by church family Christmas lunch
Wed 22	6.00	Village carol singing in the Square
Sun 24	6.00	Christingle Service led by Luke Talmage
Mon 25	10.00	Christmas day service led by Jamie Marriott
Sun 31	10.00 10.30	Church Open for Prayer Reflective service led by the deacons
<b>Jan2018</b>		<b>Happy New Year!</b>
Sun 7	9.30	Short communion service led by Tim Spotswood
	11.00	Stoke Stampede – 10k run
Fri 19	3.30	Messy Church – advance notice