



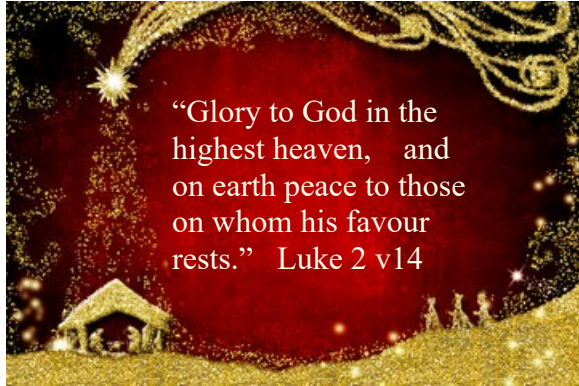
Ackworth Community Church News Letter

www.ackworthcommunitychurch.co.uk

Issue 185
December 2020

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“Glory to God in the
highest heaven, and
on earth peace to those
on whom his favour
rests.” Luke 2 v14

What's Happening This Month

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Ash's Letter

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.- Isaiah 7: 14

As we enter into December 2020 I think it's probably true to say that it's been one of the strangest, most disjointed and difficult years that I have experienced. I'm sure none of us will forget this year in a hurry. As we approach the Christmas season, usually a hotbed of activity, gathering together and reaching out to the community, unfortunately we are still living in lock-down and the festivities and the celebration of the Lord's coming will be very different this time around.

One of the most difficult things about this year has been the curtailment of being able to physically meet together as Ackworth Community Church. One of the things that this year has made me appreciate is the simple joys of gathering together Sunday by Sunday, of worshipping together, of standing together in prayer, of hearing God's word together and sharing a cuppa together. I'm grateful that technology has moved on to such an extent that we've been still able to broadcast a weekly service online and who'd even heard of zoom in January of this year or would have predicted that it would play such an important part in our church life in 2020? But I'm sure you'll agree that being online isn't quite the same, we lose something when we're not together. There's nothing quite like being present! Which brings me back to Christmas and here's a question for you: What's your favourite Christmas present that you've ever received? As I think back through the years there's a few delights that spring to mind. But there is definitely one unexpected gift that I received that stands head and shoulders above all the others put together. My favourite Christmas present was Christmas present. Let me explain.

Way back when I was 11, I can still clearly remember my dad coming back from the pit and saying that we were going to church to a Christmas carol service. To say I was less than thrilled was a bit of an understatement. However, we went, enjoyed it and so began a life long journey. I soon discovered that going to church wasn't just about learning of a far off God and a long gone historical figure, who claimed to be God's son, it was much



more interesting, dynamic and life changing than that. It was about getting to know a God who was near, his son who had come to be Immanuel, God with us and experiencing his Holy Spirit who God had sent to dwell within us. So my thoughts at this time of year often return to my earliest days of discovering faith and finding that the greatest of all gifts is to know that the reason we celebrate Christmas is present with us.

And our prayer for early next year is that in some way we might be able to be present with each other again. Remember, this Christmas time that Jesus was sent to be Immanuel, God with us.

Ash.

Prayer and Pastoral Support

Just a reminder that should a need arise; there are a couple of means of support available. Firstly, there is prayer support, so if you contact Ash or any of the elders with a prayer request then they can circulate it to people through e-mail and word-of-mouth.

Also, there is pastoral support, so again you could contact Ash, Tony, Neill, Alyn or Denise and they will arrange some appropriate help where possible.



Our Web Site

Our Sunday services are now online as well as the monthly news letter both are in the resources tab on the website.

www.ackworthcommunitychurch.co.uk

Birthday Celebrations

5th December - Adrian

11th December - Brian

16th December - Brenda

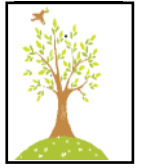
20th December - Denise

25th December - Vera

26th December - Christina

31st December - Janet

*A Very Happy Birthday From Everyone At
Ackworth Community Church*



Love came down at Christmas,

Love came down at Christmas,

Love all lovely, Love Divine;

Love was born at Christmas,

Star and angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead,

Love Incarnate, Love Divine;

Worship we our Jesus:

But wherewith for sacred sign?

Love shall be our token,

Love be yours and love be mine,

Love to God and all men,

Love for plea and gift and sign



THE
CHRISTMAS TREE
I KNOW WHO I AM

I am God's child. (John 1:12)

I am Christ's friend. (John 15:15)

I am united with the Lord. (1 Cor. 6:17)

I am bought with a price. (1 Cor. 6:19-20)

I am a saint (set apart for God). (Eph. 1:1)

I am a personal witness of Christ. (Acts 1:8)

I am the salt & light of the earth. (Matt. 5:13-14)

I am a member of the body of Christ. (1 Cor. 12:27)

I am free forever from condemnation. (Rom. 8: 1-2)

I am a citizen of Heaven. I am significant. (Phil. 3:20)

I am free from any charge against me. (Rom. 8:31 -34)

I am a minister of reconciliation for God. (2 Cor. 5:17-21)

I have access to God through the Holy Spirit. (Eph. 2:18)

I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realms. (Eph. 2:6)

I cannot be separated from the love of God. (Rom. 8:35-39)

I am established, anointed, sealed by God. (2 Cor. 1:21- 22)

I am assured all things work together for good. (Rom. 8: 28)

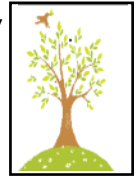
I have been chosen & appointed to bear fruit. (John 15:16)

I belong to God

And that is who He says I am. How about you?

“The LORD bless you and keep you;
the LORD make His face shine upon you
and be gracious to you;
the LORD turn His face toward you
and give you peace...”

Numbers 6:24-26



"Each of us is an innkeeper who decides if there is room for Jesus."

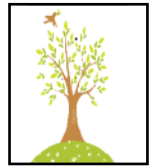
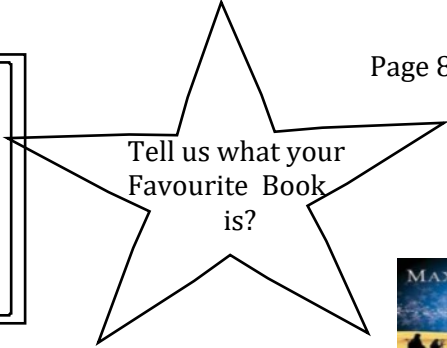
"I had never thought much about the innkeeper. He is depicted in Christmas stories and nativity's generally in one of two ways. Either he closes his door in the faces of the couple, or he shows them around back to the stables with the animals. What is the truth about the innkeeper?"

None of the biblical accounts of the birth of Jesus even mentions the innkeeper. In fact, the only reference to a manger or an inn is in the Book of Luke. "And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." (Luke.2:7). On the basis of that single sentence, we convict the innkeeper of shutting Jesus out. Perhaps we have been too hard on him.

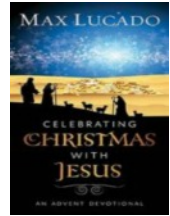
I think the innkeeper is an improbable hero. He had no reason to know that the strangers at his door were about to bring the Messiah into the world. Had he known, perhaps he would have made room for them, but that would have meant that some other weary travelers would need to be displaced. Yet, rather than making excuses, the innkeeper was resourceful, and gave what he could give—not a room or even a corner in his already crowded inn, but the stable that demonstrates that the King of the world is at home with the humblest of the humble.

The arrival of the long-expected Messiah stood out in contrast to peoples' expectations. He did not come in a manner befitting of a king. No pomp and circumstance, no great earthquake, no thunder and lightning, no burning bush, but humbly and anonymously in a barn to a young unmarried woman. The Jesus born in those surroundings would grow up to teach us to believe the unbelievable, to be prepared for the unexpected, and that the poor and meek will occupy a prominent place in the Kingdom of Heaven. Less prominent than even the lowly shepherds and animals, the innkeeper is neither mentioned by the writers of the gospel nor placed in the crèches that adorn our mantels and tables during Christmastime. Rather, he was and is behind the scenes, humbly and anonymously playing a major part in God's great plan. He serves as a reminder to us that God uses what we have. Perhaps we should be more like the innkeeper.

Dear God, Give me the compassion of the innkeeper. Even when circumstances indicate that I have used up everything I have to give, give me the courage to stand out in contrast to the status quo, and the awareness and the resourcefulness to make room for Christ. Amen."



Celebrating Christmas With Jesus £3.97



Every Christmas, Christians all over the world celebrate the advent season, recognising the love, hope, joy, and peace that is found only in Jesus Christ.

Through this 30-day devotional, Max Lucado brings to light the many events in the life of Christ from birth to ascension that demonstrate His omnipotence and the gift that God has given each one of us to enjoy during this Christmas season.

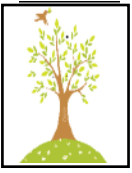
Let Advent come alive in your life this Christmas.



Advent Together £6.49

Journey through Advent together as a family with daily readings, prayers, thoughts and activities for all ages.

As the parents of a blended family of five children, Steve and Bekah Legg bring a fun, engaging and accessible approach to reading and understanding the Bible so that everyone can join in and understand.



Coming Events for December



Christmas Preparation: Sunday 6th December: 10.30am
(Online)

Christmas Messy Church / Christingle – Sunday 6th
December – 5pm (online)

Reflections on 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing': Sunday 13th
December: 10.30am (online)

Christmas Quiz: Wednesday 16th December: 7pm (online)

Carols by Candlelight: Sunday 20th December: 5pm (online)
Note There will be no Morning Service.

Christmas Day: Friday 25th December: 10am (online)

**There will be no online Sunday Service on the
27th December.**





An Unhurried Season

I wonder if the participants in the original Christmas story ever dreamed that the celebration of Christ's birth would become so hassled and hurried. The shepherds? The angels? The wise men? Mary and Joseph too?

Was hurriedness present the night Jesus was born? We might think that it was not. But actually, there was hurry present that night. However, it wasn't to the to get groceries or presents that people were rushing for.

The shepherds were working in the fields when suddenly an ensemble of angels told them the Christ Child had been born. Luke 2:16 says they hurried off to find Him lying in a manger.

If I had been one of those shepherds, I would have been quiet and amazed once I got there. Being around a newborn baby makes me speak in a hushed tone and feel such awe as I see new life. In the presence of Jesus I wonder if those men too were settled and silent.

Maybe we could do the same today. In the midst of our hustle and bustle, we could stop; leave our work. We could slow down long enough to hurry in another direction. We could put our activities on hold so we might quietly meet with our Lord. We could be settled and silent in the presence of Jesus.

As a result we just might discover an unhurried season that will strengthen us spiritually instead of sapping our energy and joy.

How about it? Will we pause and purpose to hurry into His presence instead of rushing from task to task? Dare we linger long enough to be refreshed by the company of the One whom the season is really about?

Dear Lord, remind me daily that it's You I should rush to during this season. Not things. Not activities. I want to seek and find only You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Prayer Diary

Please pray for each other.

If you would like to be on the prayer list please let Lisa know.

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
	1 Julian & Valerie	2 Lisa Vera	3 Julian, & Caroline	4 Dot Brenda Jean	5 Tony & Family	6 David & Janet
7 Adrian, & Anne	8 Steven & Christina	9 Matt, Cheryl, Oscar & Georgina	10 David & Carol R	11 Neill, Sue, Grace & Hope	12 Andy, Sue & Rachel	13 Denise Joan B
14 Ann-Marie & Alison	15 Stan & Moira	16 Jacquie May Julie	17 John & Lilian	18 Ash, Di, Joel & Cerwys	19 Kevin & Jeanie	20 Kate & Jean L
21 Florence. Nick, Becky, Lycan & Archer	22 Neil & Eileen	23 Andrew, Kimberley, Hannah & Joanna	24 Owen & Vickie	25 Alyn & Carole	26 Derek Catherine & Family	27 Somesh & Jasmine
28 Dayo, Anu, Shalom & Shekinah	29 Brian & Linda	30 Joan A James	31 Elders			