

CORNER



DECEMBER 2019/JANUARY 2020

STONE



MAGAZINE OF CENTRAL CHURCH

Ministers: Revd Peter Williamson & Revd Jerry Cook



FOR ANY FURTHER INFORMATION

ON CENTRAL CHURCH

YOUR CONTACT IS

Margaret Newman
Church Life Coordinator.

Email: h.m.newman123@btinternet.com

MINISTER

Peter Williamson writes.

Whilst this edition of 'Cornerstone' covers both December and January this will be the only opportunity I'll get to write to you about Christmas; so this will be a sort of pre-Christmas message as well as one that will go into the New Year too. Along the way I'll touch on Christmas too. In fact (surprise, surprise) I'm majoring on the festival of Christmas. With everybody else already preparing for the festive season, why not me too? And as you read you'll find that what I'm on about doesn't apply just to Christmas. In fact I'm turning you away from something that's 'just Christmassy' to something that could be very everyday.

Christmas is a Christian holiday – a celebration of the One who lived a special life and, by example, gave us instruction on how to live life in all its fulness. The secular world has muscled in on it and is starting to call it 'Midwinter Festival' or 'Winter Holiday' or some such variation but essentially for us Christmas is a celebration of the birth of Christ.

We proclaim, "Joy to the world; peace on earth; and, goodwill to men," during the Christmas season, but joy, peace and goodwill do not just suddenly appear because it is Christmas; although we may see more people striving towards those values at this time of year; (or perhaps, not, as the pressures of the big day loom ever larger!!!) Such sought after principles only emerge once a master principle has been accepted – a disregard of self and a willing acceptance of self-sacrifice.

I remember the self-sacrifice of my hardworking parents as they struggled to provide the material things they thought would make their little boy happy on Christmas morning. What has outlasted those gifts was the emotional support – the love and guidance- that my parents shared during the times we spent together, at home, in church and with school activities.

Today, as then, it is often easier for us to give material things to each other rather than provide an incentive for some of the traditions and

experiences that we observe at Christmas, to become principles for living throughout the year: such as:

- Togetherness: The family seated around the table for the holiday meal, which also can be the family seated around the table for a *daily* meal together.
- Family Prayer: The time devoted to thanking God on Christmas Day for the good things of life; which can be extended to time set aside for communicating with God *every* day.
- Anticipation: Facing *each* day with the spirit of a child on Christmas morning, generating an enthusiasm and joy that can be contagious to everyone we encounter at home, church, work or school.
- Self-sacrifice: How we “go out of our way” for Christmas, which can also be how we make that little bit extra effort on a *daily* basis; giving gifts of time, concern and assistance – giving love each and every day.

An impossibility you say? Surely trying to attempt all of that for one *day* is well nigh impossible without being asked to do it *daily*! I totally agree with you. It is not humanly possible – but with *God ALL* things are possible.

The impossible becomes possible when we take on board the fact that God loved us so much that He sent His Son, so that we might live an eternal life filled with joy, peace and goodwill. Then we can embody the Christmas spirit throughout the year, celebrating not just with a special day or a special week, but with a special life bringing with it joy, peace and goodwill; which is where I began – so in order not to repeat myself, I’ll shut up. . . . but not quite.

May the old story of Christmas be Good News to you and yours again this year as we remember God’s gift to his children. Let’s open our minds and hearts to hear the Christmas story anew and remember that “Love Came Down at Christmas.”

See you in church and around Torbay

RESTORING PEACE IN IRAQ

Another story of good news in Iraq! Christians in northern Iraq have new hope for a more peaceful future, thanks to your support for the Hope for the Middle East campaign.

With your help Open Doors partners have now restored over 1,270 houses in the Christian villages of the Ninevah Plain. Louy (42) a father, teacher and follower of Christ, is one of many Christians who have returned to their village determined to restore peace in their communities.

In 2014 Louy and his family had to flee their home in Bartella when so-called Islamic State (IS) invaded the region. After several years away, the family returned, repairing their home with help from Open Doors' local partners. Louy is so grateful to everyone who has supported them.

Perhaps you can remember a stressful time when you had to move to a new place.

Louy describes how his 12 year old son Sharbel 'felt cut off from his friends, his school, his street and home.'

Now they are back, Sharbel says: "It's much better now; my friends are here and the church is nearby.

Despite all the family have endured they continue to trust God. Louy says "Even during our displacement, we said that it may be God's plan for us as Christians. This is our life – we've built it on this basis and we thank God in every situation."

As a teacher at a school with many Muslim students, Louy teaches peace in his classroom. "We as Christian's are considered 'sons of peace'."

PRAY that Iraqi Christians would be encouraged, protected and enabled to share the gospel, despite the enormous challenges of living in a Muslim majority country.

Open Doors Prayer Diary November



To perceive Christmas through its wrapping
becomes more difficult each year.

A REFLECTION

How can we be approaching Christmas already? Where has 2019 gone? It does not seem twelve months ago that we were celebrating the Birth of Jesus.

For many, this Christmas will be a sad time. For many, this Christmas there will be quite a few remembering loved-ones who were with them last Christmas, but this year those loved-ones will be celebrating Christmas in Heaven. For most of us, there will be names on our Christmas card list which we shall not be writing this year.

Central has lost so many members during 2019, and that means that for so many of you, this Christmas will just hold memories -- and evoke tears of loss.

But, for others, new babies have been born into our families since Father Christmas came last. Perhaps others have gained a new son/daughter-in-law or new grandson/granddaughter-in-law, and there will be great happiness.

But, whether Christmas will bring sadness, or happiness, we shall be remembering the time when Jesus left His Home in Glory, and came to earth for you and me. That surely should be a time of great rejoicing. Jesus had everything, but then had nothing, being born in a stable.

In many Churches up and down our land, Central included, the Nativity will be played out, by children, young people, and in some cases, adults.

Joseph was very unsure when the angel told him that Mary was going to have a baby. He knew he hadn't made her pregnant. But, in a dream, the angel assured him that this Baby was conceived by the Holy Spirit. Mary, on the other hand, responded to the angel "I am the Lord's servant, may it be to me as you have said".

We all waver at times don't we if God asks us to do something for Him.

We all waver sometimes when life doesn't seem fair. We are all a bit like Joseph. Perhaps we should be more like Mary, and trust God. God never asks us to endure more than we are able. And at all times God is

with us, as He was with Mary and Joseph. Perhaps we need to keep repeating the words of the carol we learned as children -- "Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay close by me for ever, and love me I pray".

Yes, Christmas is a time of rejoicing; of being grateful that Jesus came to earth for you and me. Let's open our hearts and, and once more accept Him into our lives.

"Joy to the world, the Lord is come, let earth receive her King; Let every heart prepare Him room".

And what of 2020? A New Year, all clean, all spanking new, is about to spread out before us. What will it bring? I don't know. But God knows. And He will be with us through the whole of those twelve months.

So, I wish each one of you, yes, a Happy Christmas, with the knowledge that Jesus came for you. And a year of walking each day with Jesus who came to be your Saviour and Friend.

"We'll praise Him for all that is past, and trust Him for all that's to come".

Margaret Newman.



**Christmas Greetings from Revd Peter and Mary
and Revd Jerry and Jean**

*May the hope of Christmas lighten your cares,
The peace of Christmas fill your heart,
The joy of Christmas bring you happiness,
The spirit of Christmas remain with you all year.*

*So may the blessing of the Christ Child enrich your life
this Christmas
And all through your life*

WHO KNEW?

Who saw the man and pregnant girl, pressing through the crowded street
Struggling through the human swirl on tired legs and aching feet?
Who knew?

Who heard her cries, in labour's pain, deep within a battered shed?
Who cared for their impoverished shame. Who thought about her grassy bed?
Who knew?

Who, listening to an infant's cries, hearing a birth, they thought it strange?
Expressed an int'rest, or surprise? Who recognised that awesome change?
Who knew?

Who saw the shepherds rush along through sleeping streets at dead of night?
Who heard the angels' glorious song? Or saw the star that shone so bright?
Who knew?

Who, fighting through the Christmas throngs, or, settling down to watch TV
Eats Christmas food, sings Christmas songs. Who can the coming Saviour see?
Who knows?

By Nigel Beeton



CHRISTMAS

Fumbling around in a frenzy. From September stress levels rise,
Dates collide, Imagination falters as presents and experiences fail to satisfy
The expectations of a world that walks In the darkness of denial and Dawkins.

Yet all the time The light shines in that darkness,
All the time The greatest gift shines on,

All the time There is hope and life has purpose.

And with each turning to the light
Love switches on. Christ comes.

by Daphne Kitching

ALL SAINTS DAY

St Cuthbert Mayne School held services to remember all saints day last week at school. The prayer that was used was very special and I thought I would share it both to think about not only special Saints but also to remember loved ones who are with the Lord.

'We thank you, Father for those we love and who have been taken away. For the joy we received while they were with us. We thank you for the love which we shared with them and we pray that nothing of their life will be lost. May they may live on in our hearts as they now live on with you. We pray that the hope they brought will inspire us and their ideas may guide us in our lives. We pray that the memory of who they were may be a vision of what we may become and we pray for ourselves in our loss. Please give us the courage to embrace each day and all that now must be. We pray for your peace and love in our lives and the future you have planned for us. Amen *Leyla Clark*

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DECEMBER 2019 CALENDAR

DAY	DATE	TIME	DETAIL
Sun	1 st		SEE SEPARATE PAGE FOR ALL SERVICES
		12.30	Community Lunch
Mon	2 nd	2.30	Central's Fellowship – Advent. Revd Valerie Price
		6.30	Flexercise Fun
Tues	3 rd	9.30	Midweek Prayers – Barbara Lawton
		10.00	Coffee & Fellowship
		10.00	Busy Bees
		7.00	New Life Housegroup
Wed	4 th	10.00	Faith Matters
Thurs	5 th	9.30	Central Tots
Fri	6 th	10.00	Coffee & Fellowship
		11.00	Belleplates
		7.00	Choir
Sun	8 th		SEE SEPARATE PAGE FOR ALL SERVICES
		12.30	Church Meeting
Mon	9 th	12.30	Central's Fellowship Christmas Lunch
Tues	10 th	9.30	Midweek Service: Philip Kay
		10.00	Coffee & Fellowship
		10.00	Busy Bees
Wed	11 th	10.00	Faith Matters
		7.30	Riviera Concert Brass for Coombe Pafford
Thurs	12 th	9.30	Central Tots
		7.30	Moors Housegroup
Fri	13 th	7.00	Choir
Sun	15 th		SEE SEPARATE PAGE FOR ALL SERVICES
		12.30	Church Meeting
Mon	16 ^h	2.00	Central's Fellowship: Christmas Tea
		6.30	Flexercise Fun
Tues	17 th	9.30	Morning Prayers – Margaret Newman
		7.00	New Life Housegroup

Thurs	19th	9.30	Central Tots
Fri	20th	11.00	Belleplates
Fri	20th	7.00	Choir
Sun	22nd		SEE SEPARATE PAGE FOR ALL SERVICES
Wed	25th	10.30	Family Service
Sun	29th		SEE SEPARATE PAGE FOR ALL SERVICES
Tues	31st	9.30	Midweek Prayers – Barbara Lawton

JANUARY 2020 CALENDAR

Fri	3rd	7.00	Choir
Sun	5th		SEE SEPARATE PAGE FOR ALL SERVICES
		12.30	Community Lunch
Mon	6 th	6.30	Flexercise Fun
Tues	7 th	9.30	Midweek Prayers – Barbara Lawton
		10.00	Coffee & Fellowship
		10.00	Busy Bees
Thurs	9th	9.30	Central Tots
		7.00	Finance & Property
Fri	10 th	10.00	Coffee & Fellowship
		11.00	Belleplates
		7.00	Choir
Sun	12th		SEE SEPARATE PAGE FOR ALL SERVICES
Mon	13 ^h	2.30	Central's Fell: By Gone Days. Barbara Lawton
		6.30	Flexercise Fun
Tues	14 th	9.30	Midweek Service – Margaret Newman
		10.00	Coffee & Fellowship
		10.00	Busy Bees
		7.00	New Life Housegroup
		2.00	Pastoral Vsitors Meeting
Wed	15th	10.00	Faith Matters
		2.00	Pastoral Visitors
Thurs	16th	9.30	Central Tots
Fri	17th	10.00	Coffee & Fellowship
		11.00	Belleplates

Fri	17th	7.00	Choir
Sun	19th		SEE SEPARATE PAGE FOR ALL SERVICES
		12.30	Church Meeting
Mon	20th	2.30	Central's Fellow: My Life in Teaching – Ann Mills
		6.30	Flexercise Fun
Tues	21 st	9.30	Midweek Prayers – Philip Kay
		10.00	Coffee & Fellowship
		10.00	Busy Bees
Wed	22 nd	10.00	Faith Matters
Thurs	23 rd	9.30	Central Tots
		7.30	Moors Housegroup
Fri	24th	10.00	Coffee & Fellowship
		11.00	Belleplates
		7.00	Choir
Sat	25th	2.30	Tea Dance
Sun	26th		SEE SEPARATE PAGE FOR ALL SERVICES
Mon	27th	2.30	Central's Fell – Musical Afternoon: Clive Bastin
		6.30	Flexercise Fun
Tues	28th	9.30	Midweek Communion/ Val Price
		10.00	Coffee & Fellowship
		10.00	Busy Bees
		7.00	New Life Housegroup
Wed	29th	10.00	Faith Matters
Thurs	30th	9.30	Central Tots
Fri	31 st	10.00	Coffee & Fellowship
		11.00	Belleplates
		7.00	Choir

FAMILY NEWS.

THANKS:

- Mary Fradley writes: Thanks you so much to Central for the Harvest Gifts. The flowers were beautiful and lasted really well. Best Wishes to you all.

SUNDAY SERVICES FOR DECEMBER 2019

(HC) = Sacrament of Holy Communion

DATE	TIME	MORNING	EVENING.6.30
1 st	10.30	Revd John Carne	Revd Peter Williamson.
8 th	9.00	Rise & Shine	
	10.30	Revd Jerry Cook (HC)	Mr Brian Hart
15 th	10.30	Revd Peter Williamson	
		Nativity	Revd Adrian Phippen (HC)
22 nd	9.00	Rise & Shine	
	10.30	Revd Valerie Price	Revd Peter Williamson (CL)
29 th	10.30	Mrs Margaret Newman	Revd Peter Williamson

SUNDAY SERVICES FOR JANUARY 2020

5 th	10.30	Revd Jerry Cook (Covenant Service)	Revd Valerie Price
12 th	9.00	Rise & Shine	
	10.30	Revd Phil Nevard	Mrs Margaret Newman
19 th	10.30	Revd Martin Manley	Abbey Road RC
26 th	9.00	Rise & Shine	
	10.30	Mr Jonathan Oliverio	Revd Peter Williamson (HC)

EXTRA CHURCH MEETINGS

YOU are needed to attend two very, very important Church Meetings during December. You will be hearing mention made of these at all church services until they have taken place.

The meetings are on Sunday's 8th and 15th December commencing around 12.30pm following our usual sandwich lunch.

There is only one topic on the agenda 'Where To From Here'. The meetings are being called as a result of a report that only came to us AFTER last time we met on Sunday 27th October.

Please do your best to come along – it is imperative that you do so even if you don't usually attend Church Meetings

DECEMBER WELCOME ROTA

DATE	10.30 am	6.30am
1 st	Sheila Lawrence & Barbara Gissinger	Paul Sherriff
8 th	Tessa Goodwin & Leone Tyas	Philip Kay
15 th	Heather Bellingham & Sue Garrod	Sue Coatham
22 nd	Monica Lansley & Philip Kay	Philip Kay
25 th	Christine & Paul Sherriff	
29 th	Sue Coatham & Barbara Gissinger	Barbara Lawton

JANUARY WELCOME ROTA

DATE	10.30 am	6.30am
5 th	Jackie Little & Paula Bastin	Paul Sherriff
12 th	Sue Coatham & Barbara Lawton	Philip Kay
19 th	Monica Lansley & Philip Kay	Barbara Gissinger
26 th	Yvonne Thorne & Cynthia Arscott	Barbara Lawton

OUTSIDE FACEBOOK

"I am trying to make friends outside Facebook's online empire while applying the principals that it uses.

Therefore every day I walk down the street and tell those I pass what I have eaten, how I feel at the moment, what I have done the night before, what I will do later, and with whom.

I give them pictures of my family, my dog, what I am eating for lunch, of me gardening, and taking things apart in the garage, watering the lawn, standing in front of landmarks, driving round town, and doing lots of other things every one does every day.

I also listen to their conversations, give them the "Thumbs Up" and tell them I like them, and will share. And it works just like Facebook.

I already have four people following me: two police officers, a private investigator and a psychiatrist."

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP AT CENTRAL

The annual Nativity service organised and presented by our Rise & Shine Group is on Sunday 15th December at 10.30am. Come along and support this important Group of our church

'Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle-shed'

Our annual Carols By Candlelight service will be held on Sunday 22th December at 6.30pm. It will re-tell the Story of Christmas in words and songs and music and will include choral and instrumental items from our various church groups. An event not to be missed and one that will fill us with the joy of Christmas.

The Christmas Day service will be held at 10.30am and will conclude by 11.15am. It will be led by Reverend Peter Williamson

Carols Around the Crib is on Sunday 29th December at 6.30pm.

If your favourite carol has still not been sung then this is a further opportunity for it to be so. It will include a variety of Christmas readings from various sources both ancient and modern - and no sermon!.

CENTRAL'S FELLOWSHIP

On 2nd the Rev Valerie Price will take us through Advent. Then on the 9th we will be holding our Christmas Lunch followed by entertainment from the Ukulele Musicians. The 16th sees us enjoying our Carol Service followed by a Christmas Tea.

Our first meeting of the New Year on 13th January will be an afternoon of 'By Gone Days' with one of our own Leaders Barbara and on 20th we welcome Ann Mills with 'My Life in Teaching'. Finally on 27th we look forward to Clive Bastin with his music.

We remember those of our fellowship struggling with health problems especially Beryl Gregory, Cynthia Arscott and Monica Lansley. We also miss Marga.

Christmas blessings to you all, and Good Wishes for the New Year.

Barbara Lawton



Winter
TEA DANCE

Friendship
Music by Tracey
TEA

Saturday 25th January 2020
2.30pm – 5.00pm

**A SOCIABLE AFTERNOON FOR ALL THOSE WHO
WISH TO SPEND TIME WITH OLD AND NEW
FRIENDS. Admission £4.00 including tea**

!! NOT TO BE READ UNTIL 2020 !!

Peter Williamson writes.

Yes, it's me again! What have you done to deserve it? Don't worry it will be March before I write again

This is the season when journalists, media people, and preachers play their own variations on the age old theme of memory and hope, the past and the future; in other words, on change.

Many New Year parties work on this theme of change too; and a game that never fails to intrigue and amuse is the Identification Parade. (Each partygoer brings along a photograph of themselves taken before they were twelve months old!) It's quite a job deciding which playful plump infant is now your Church Steward, Treasurer or Organist. And whether the red and wrinkled new born baby is now that gorgeous bombshell who is the centre of the party OR which of your ministers – if either!

Looking at old photographs is a useful reminder that time never stands still. Everything is changing either fast or slowly.

The way God created the universe shows us that He did not intend us to be bored by monotony. He is the creator of infinite change. Day and night, sunshine, shower calm and storm; spring summer, autumn, winter – as well as everything else, reminds us that everything is on the move.

We are changing too – and not only on the outside. We are different in other ways too. We hear people say, "He's a different man to what he was six months ago." "I don't know what's got into her these days – she's not the same girl I first knew." The plain fact is that we have all changed over the past year. We are either better quality or poorer. We have matured or fallen back in our Christian living; because there is no standing still.

Think back over 2019. Have we become easier to live with? Have we become stronger in standing up for what is right, for fair dealings, and honesty? How far have we allowed the Lord to direct us and our lives?

Even if 2019 has been a difficult year for you there must be something to give thanks for (Even if its only to thank God it's over!) But to be serious. We are nourished by mighty memories and we can cherish those times when the Divine Presence came near; hearing childhood prayers, graces known in a moment of joy or anguish. An inspiring book or piece of music, one memorable act of worship.

There will be parts of 2019 we would wish to forget. The best of us have things to be sorry for. Every temptation we have fallen to – again and again, because we didn't think to ask for God's help to withstand. There have been people we have hurt and failed and disappointed. At the start of a fresh year, let's ask their's, and God's, forgiveness.

What of 2020? The future is easier to cope with as we deal with it with God; no matter what it is we have to face. This year can be a New Year if we go into it with God. But it can also simply be a continuance of time as we plod on alone.

I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year

"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."

And he replied, "Go out into the darkness, and put your hand into the hand of God.

That shall be to you better than light, and safer than a known way."

May that Almighty Hand guide and uphold us all.

(Minnie Haskins (1875-1957) and quoted by King George VI, Christmas Day 1939

Let's make 2020 a really new year with God so I wish you a very happy new year

RECLAIMING HOPE IN IRAQ

Intense protracted conflict across Iraq over the past decade has left a crippling legacy of mental health conditions, many women and girls who lived under Isis control have witnessed or suffered and survived, horrific scenes of death, sexual assault, enslavement or torture.

Let's pray for hope and healing and also for Tearfund staff who are responding.

Beneath the surface:

Generations of Afghan people have witnessed trauma and violence. Men, women and children have all been affected and the prevalence of mental health disorders is very high

Please pray that families across the country will have access to the help they need, so that homes can be healed and lives restored.

Taken from the Tearfund prayer Diary.= November



The Christmas Heart

Let us remember that the Christmas heart is a giving heart, a wide open heart, that thinks of others first. The birth of the baby Jesus stands as the most significant event in all history, because it has meant the pouring into a sick world of the healing medicine of love which has transformed all manner of hearts for almost 2000 yearsUnderneath all the bulging bundles is this beating Christmas heart. *Helen Keller*



Christmas at
Central 2019



CHRISTMAS EVE CAROL SINGING

Around the Hotels

Meet at the

Livermead Cliff Hotel 9.00pm

Livermead House Hotel 9.30pm

We shall be collecting for Action for Children



Enquiries to
Linda Duckworth
Dress code: Not casual

