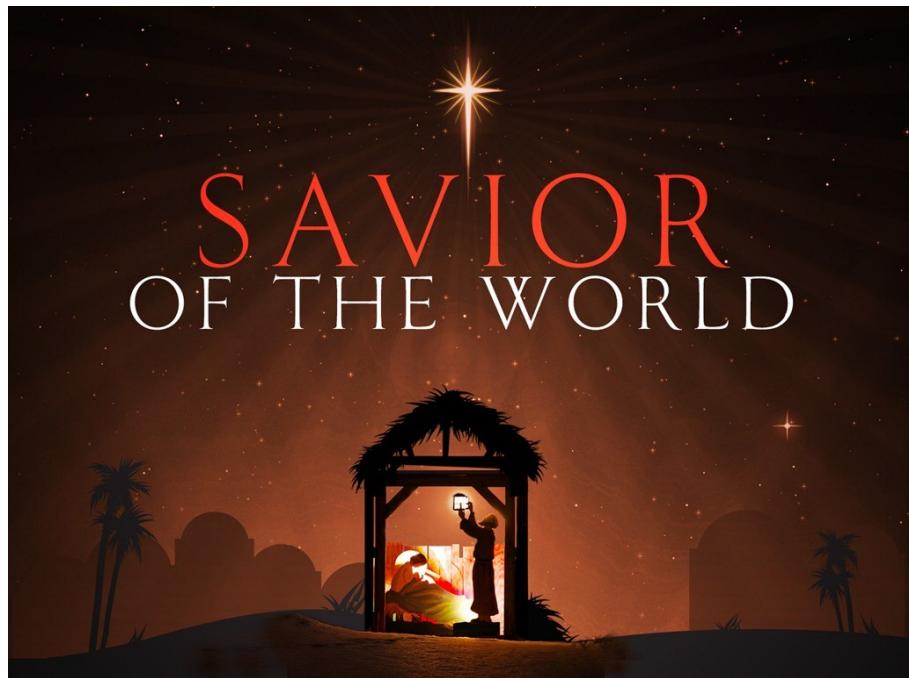




150 Years of Worship and Outreach

Central  
United Reformed Church  
Hove



December-2013/January 2014

## **CHURCH ACTIVITIES**

*Sunday Youth Ministry*

Mrs. A. Austen

Mrs C. Vaughan

*Boys' Brigade*  
(Mondays)

Mr. C. Jukes

*Girls' Club*  
(Tuesday)

Mrs. S. Hill

*Tuesday Fellowship*  
(Alternate Tuesdays)

Mrs Celia Baines – Holmes

*Men's Fellowship*  
(Third Wednesday)

Mr. P. Gear

*Welcome Break*  
(Wednesdays)

Mrs. P. Macaulay

*Bluebird Parent & under 3s Group*    Mrs K. Hancox

Church Web Site

Mr John Brewster

**Church Hall Tel: 01273 734162**

**Email: [info@centralurchove.com](mailto:info@centralurchove.com)**

# Dear Friends,

It's a time of endings. I have recently found myself thinking, "Well that's the last time I'll do that." Writing this minister's letter for the church magazine is a good example. It's a strange feeling, shot through with sadness, some nostalgia, but also anticipation. Endings are not as simple as a full stop. They are usually, if not always, transitions in disguise.

In December, everything dies. The last leaf falls and the earth seems to go to sleep. The sun reaches its lowest zenith just before Christmas. That's no co-incidence. The pagan festival of the birth of the sun after the winter solstice seemed to our spiritual ancestors as good a time as any to celebrate the birth of the Son (although that works much better in English than in the languages of our spiritual ancestors). Everything dies, but spring is on its way. It's not an ending, but a transition.

T.S. Eliot, in his poem 'The Journey of the Magi', reflects on the journey of the wise men to see Jesus. At the climax of the poem, the mage speaking asks, "Were we led all that way for birth or death?" When Jesus was born, the world changed. God had taken on himself human flesh and blood. Nothing could be the same again, including the wise men. In the poem they are "No longer at ease here, in the old dispensation." At Christmas there was a birth, but in the birth was also death – the end of a world where God could be thought of as remote; the end of bargains to bring you near to God; the end of excuses for not engaging with God and your neighbour in love. Life based around power and division, greed and self-justification, has to end in the presence of the God of all creation lying helpless in a manger: the Ancient of Days, newborn. Everything dies at Christmas, and everything is made new in Jesus Christ. Everything changes.

Set alongside this massive transition that the coming of Christ brings to the world, my departure for a new ministry is extremely small beer. I think we'll cope. Actually, I think we'll do better than cope, because we are trusting in the love of Christ that changes the world and saves us all. In the hands of Jesus, endings are transitions into new life.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your companionship over our journey together these past seven years. We have seen birth and death, good times and bad times. Through it all, it has been a privilege to have been your minister, and especially to have been trusted to accompany you through some of the crucial moments of your lives.

Perhaps very little turned out as we'd expected at the start, but that's God for you. I pray that God will continue to challenge, equip and lead you on your journey. We belong to one another in Christ, and nothing ever changes that.

But I've not gone yet! Meanwhile, there's Christmas to prepare for and to celebrate. May God bless you richly and bring new life to you, to the Church, and to this world of need this Christmas time and beyond.

Alex Mabbs.



## **FAMILY NEWS FROM CENTRAL**

Last month we reported in the magazine that **Elsie Flack's** health had taken a turn for the worse: now, sadly we regret to inform you of Elsie's death, in hospital, on 10<sup>th</sup> November. We mourn the loss of a lively and dedicated woman who not only was a wonderful wife and mother but who supported John, her husband, in so many ways in his ministry. There are many in both Hounsom and Central congregations who remember her organisational and musical talents with fondness. A fuller tribute appears on pages 11 & 12 of the magazine. In the meantime, as we extend our sympathy to **John, Stephen, Jennifer** and all the family circle, may they feel surrounded by our love, prayers and concern and be comforted.

It was a pleasure to welcome **Molly Fraser** back to church and to learn that she is still cheerful after her mishap. Unfortunately, **Ann Beach's** return from hospital was short lived and she has suffered a serious fall whilst in Chichester with her son. **Doreen Simmonds**, too, is recovering from a series of falls but is still hoping to go over to N. Ireland for Christmas.

**Sheila Lyall** is making good progress after having a cataract removed and we pray that everything will continue smoothly for her.

Please remember to hold **Mary Cochrane** in prayer as she undergoes an operation on her shoulder in Haywards Heath Hospital on 12<sup>th</sup> December. Mary is fast becoming a bionic woman! We hope that all will go well with her and that she will make a good recovery.

**Jenny Flint** and **Celia Baines-Holmes** continue with their treatments and we hope that these may be organised so that they may enjoy some of the Christmas festivities.

We have all been very concerned about **Doreen Fookes'** health recently. As last we have a diagnosis. Doreen is suffering from spinal stenosis and has been spending to past weeks in Cravenvale Rehabilitation Centre trying to find a different way of coping. We understand that she may be returning to her flat soon. Please hold **Doreen, Suzanne** and all the family in your prayers as they endeavour to adjust to a new way of life for Doreen and take important decisions about Doreen's future.

Warmest congratulations to **Jinny Smith** on gaining her M.A. degree. A great deal of hard work and perseverance has deservedly paid off.

Our thanks also to Jinny for playing the piano at our November Parade

Service, when **Carl Jukes** swapped his place behind the organ to playing front of house standing at the pulpit, as he led our worship. Carl had obviously prepared diligently and his choice of hymns blended well with his pictures and their stories to make his message plain. In BB jargon, Well done, Carl.

At the last Church Meeting the congregations took the opportunity to express its thanks to **Jill Humphrey** by presenting her with an orchid plant. Jill has just stood down from helping with the Sunday Youth Ministry, after over 42 years of service. An amazing record! Jill's interest and support in the young continues to find expression in her helping in Bluebird and the BB.



Jill Humphrey

We begin Advent by welcoming **Barbara Hicks** into membership at the morning service on December 1<sup>st</sup>. We pray that she will find friendship and fellowship amongst us.

We wish everyone all the blessings of the Christmas season and a healthy, happy New Year.

Please continue to hold in prayer:

*John Flack, John Gilson, Shirley & Clive Hamblin, Peggy McMillen, Tebello Sibanda, Barbara Woolvett and Dorothy Welsh.*

**BREAKING NEWS: Francee Beacham** has become a Granny! In the wee sma' hours of St Andrew's Day her grandson was born weighing, 10 lbs 5 ozs! Congratulations and best wishes to the new family. Fuller information in the next magazine.

**10th BRIGHTON (HOVE) BOYS' BRIGADE  
COMPANY**  
**COFFEE MORNING**



Peter Gear

Worked hard guarding the  
dishwasher



I like my coffee strong!





We are rehearsing hard for our Old Time Music Hall in January



It  
***WILL***  
Be  
All right  
On the night!



# Ventnor Old Time Music Hall

**Friday 24th January  
7:30pm**

**Saturday 25th January  
2:30pm & 7:30pm**

Tickets available from  
Sarah 01903 526036

or  
[thetenthbb@hotmail.com](mailto:thetenthbb@hotmail.com)  
Adults £5 Child £3



**10th Brighton (Hove)  
Boys Brigade**

[www.centralurchove.com](http://www.centralurchove.com)



And finally: Carl Jukes and some of the Boys from the Company Section have created a website for the Brighton Stedfast Association .

Go to [www.brightonstedfast.org.uk](http://www.brightonstedfast.org.uk).

**Merry Christmas & Happy New Year to you all from The Tenth.**

## CALLING CHRISTMAS SINGERS

Practices for this year's Carol Service will start after the morning service on 1<sup>st</sup> December and continue each Sunday thereafter. A mid-week rehearsal may also be scheduled, if enough people are available.

Everyone welcome to come along.

If you are interested, please speak to Alan Ireland.



## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Once again the large Christmas Card with its stickers will be available in the Upper Vestibule, so that we can send greetings to our friends in the church instead of buying individual Christmas cards.

The money donated will go to charity.

This year the chosen charity is The Beachy Head Chaplaincy Team.

Earlier this year one of their volunteers came to the Tuesday Fellowship to tell us about their work. We were all so impressed by their wonderful dedication to their task. The volunteers are all committed Christians from churches in the local area. They man the cliff top 24hours-7days a week to help desperate folk, who come from all over the world intent on committing suicide.

This year has been their busiest – they have saved 252 people since January.

Please give generously to help their vital work.

The card is on display from Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December.

## ELSIE FLACK

Before she died, Elsie Flack left meticulous instructions about her funeral arrangements, which could be simply stated as, “No fuss.” The great number of people who ignored this and came to pay their respects at the service at Woodvale crematorium, is indicative of the respect and affection in which she was held.

Elsie, was a mother, grandmother and great grandmother but it is perhaps in her role as wife and helpmate to John that most of us in church remember her. They were married for over 65 years and were completely dedicated to loving, caring and supporting each other. During John’s years of ministry, Elsie supported him in every way possible, ensuring that he could perform his ministerial and pastoral duties without having to worry about domestic issues at home.

But Elsie was by no means housebound. She amalgamated the characters of both Mary and Martha. She often used her musical, Dramatic and poetic talents to share with John in leading worship. Those of us who were fortunate to attend some of the evening services John led often had the added pleasure of Elsie reciting a poem or singing to illustrate or reinforce the message.

Many people have spoken of Elsie’s organisational ability and her financial wizardry. She organised many trips to Oberammergau and the Holy Land. John led the pilgrimages and Elsie ensured everyone got there!

Being able to organise others was a great talent when it came to one of Elsie’s great loves – the Girls’ Brigade. Elsie actually started in the Girls’ Guildrey at the age of five before it morphed into Girls’ Brigade. She eventually became an officer in 1973 and for many years acted as Captain to the Girls’ Brigade Company in Hounsom, where it flourished under her leadership. She was particularly keen on training Young Leaders and she also was responsible for organising and training the GB band.

She was very musical and played both the piano and organ, even playing on the stage of the Albert Hall and Dome. She also managed to bring members of our churches together, before the Pastorate was ever mentioned, by getting them together to perform and sing in “Jesus Folk” and “Spirit”.

Elsie was an energetic, vigorous woman who played tennis regularly into

her 70s. She embraced the new technology and was very computer literate. She found them a blessing when her eyesight began to fail as they helped her keep in touch and on top of things.

To everything, she brought fun and laughter, even whilst demanding the highest standards but no higher than she herself was prepared to meet. Many stories have been recounted, including her being chased by a Messerschmidt down Elm Grove and her posting crabs through letterboxes when she was younger!

Above all Elsie was a woman of faith and commitment as is evidence by her years of service to the church and young people and exemplified by the readings she chose for her final service – Romans 8 and John 14.

Her daughter, Jennifer, read the poem, “She is Gone” because she felt it was so appropriate for her mother.

*You can shed tears that she is gone  
Or you can smile because she lived.*

*You can remember her and only that she is gone  
Or you can cherish her memory and let it live on.*

*You can cry and close your mind,  
Be empty and turn your back  
Or you can do as she would want  
**Smile, open your eyes, love and go on.***



CENTRAL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HOVE

# Christmas fayre

Saturday, 7th December

10.00 a.m. — 1.00 p.m.

Ventnor Hall

Books, Bric-a-Brac, Cakes,

Cards & Crafts, Groceries,

Toys, Toiletries,

FairTrade & Books Alive Stalls

Morning Coffee & Tea

Light Lunches from 12 noon

# CHURCH CALENDAR

## DECEMBER



SUN 1	<b>FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b> Gifts around the Christmas Tree Family Service – Holy Communion Rev Alex Mabbs Evening Worship – The Junction	10.30 am 6.30 pm
Mon 4	BB Enrolment Service In the church All welcome Ladies Prayer Group	7.00 pm 8.00 pm
Fri 6	Preparations for Christmas Fair	
Sat. 7	<b>CHRISTMAS FAIR</b>	10.00 am
SUN 8	<b>SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b> Family Service Rev Peter Elliott Evening Worship Rev Roger Wood	10.30 am 6.30 pm
Tue 12	Tuesday Fellowship – Christmas Party	2.30 pm
Fri 13	Ladies' Night	7.00 pm
Sat 14	Carol Singing – George Street	11.00 am
SUN 15	<b>THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b> Family Service Rev Roger Wood Evening Worship	10.30 am 6.30 pm
Mon 16	Bluebird Nativity	10.00 am
Tue 17	Bluebird Nativity	10.00 am
SUN 22	<b>FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b> Family Service – SYM & Rev Alex Mabbs Carols by Candlelight Followed by refreshments	10.30 am 6.30 pm

Tue 24	<b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b>	
	Midnight Communion	11.30 pm
	Rev Roger Wood	
Wed 25	<b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b>	
	Family Service	10.30 am
	Rev Alex Mabbs	
SUN 29		
	Family Service	10.30 am
	Stuart Dew	
	Evening Worship	6.30 pm
	Rev Roger Wood	



**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

**2014**

## **JANUARY**

SUN 5	Family Service – Holy Communion Gifts Around the Christmas Tree Rev Roger Wood Evening Worship – The Junction	10.30 am 6.30 pm
Mon 6	Ladies' Prayer Group	8.00 pm
Wed 8	Elders' Meeting	7.30 pm
SUN 12	Family Service Rev Peter Elliott Evening Worship	10.30 am 6.30 pm
Tue 14	Tuesday Fellowship – Mr Inman My Life as an Auctioneer	2.30 pm
Wed 15	Men's Fellowship New Year Party	7.45 pm

Sat 18           **WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY**  
18<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> January

SUN 19	Family Service Rev Peter Elliott United Service at Sacred Heart, Norton Road Led by Father Kevin Dring Preacher: Rev Roger Wood	10.30 am 6.30 pm
Fri 24	BB Old Time Music Hall	7.30 pm
SAT 25	BB Old Time Music Hall BB Old Time Music Hall	2.30 pm 7.30 pm
SUN 26	Family Service – Parade Evening Worship Rev Peter Elliott	10.30 am 6.30 pm
Mon 27	Christian Book Club “Major Pettigrew’s Last Stand” (Chip Dunn)	8.00 pm
Tue 28	Tuesday Fellowship Members’ Afternoon	2.30 pm

## **FEBRUARY**

SUN 2	Family Service – Holy Communion Naomi McBain Evening Worship - The Junction	10.30 am 6.30 pm
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- All contributions for the **FEBRUARY** edition of the magazine must be handed in no later than **SUNDAY 19TH JANUARY.**
- Please inform Mrs Sheena Ireland by Wednesday of the preceding week of any calendar changes so that the calendar on the Order of Service may be altered.

## FLOWERS FOR DECEMBER

- 1<sup>st</sup> Ruth Shepherd
- 8<sup>th</sup> Welcome Break
- 15<sup>th</sup> Keren Hancox & Rosemary Brice
- 22<sup>nd</sup> ) Christmas Flowers
- 29<sup>th</sup> ) Christmas Flowers

*All contributions to the cost of Christmas Flowers will be gratefully received by Ann Throup or Rosemary Brice.*

*If you have any evergreen foliage in your garden we would also appreciate it if you could bring it along to the Flower Room by Friday 20th December.*



## JANUARY

- 5<sup>th</sup> Jan Owen – in memory of Bill
- 12<sup>th</sup> Sheila & Jim Lyall – in memory of their parents
- 19<sup>th</sup> Dr Sheila Purchase
- 26<sup>th</sup> June Whittle – in memory of Ray

## **SECURITY.**

The Building Committee would like to draw attention to the need to be aware of security on our premises.

The main access door in Ventnor Villas has a self-closing mechanism but the door should always be checked to ensure that it has closed properly. The Blatchington Road entrance has a panic bar on the inside. This bar must be properly engaged, otherwise the door can be pulled open from the pavement.

All inside doors, which are lockable, must be secured, particularly the door between the lobby by the office and the vestibule by the kitchen. This double door must be bolted on the inside before it can be properly secured. All windows must be closed, particularly on the ground floor.

Last off the premises?? Please check! We cannot be too careful!

**Ladies ,**

*We appreciate how hard you have worked this  
year*

*So*

*You are invited to a*

**Ladies Night**



*A night of glitter & glam*

*On*

**13th December in the New Hall**

*Please let us know if you plan to come by 9th December - tell Keren or put your name on the sign up notice board list.*

# **YOUR FINANCIAL GIVING FOR THE LIFE OF CENTRAL**

## **& OFFERTORY ENVELOPES 2014**

For those of you who are in the ‘Free Will Offertory’ envelope scheme (that’s the small, blue weekly offering envelopes), the new envelopes for 2014 have arrived and will be distributed to you shortly.

Thank you to everyone for your continued financial support which is absolutely vital for the work of Central. Whether you give by way of the blue envelope scheme, or by bank standing order or by placing cash in the offertory bag each week, every penny counts !

If you are not already involved in the blue envelope scheme or a standing order and would like to do so, please do not hesitate to let me or Carol Tyler know and also if you want to move from the blue envelope scheme to a standing order – less cash to count for the Finance Committee each week !

Whilst the gift aid rules have slightly relaxed in terms of cash giving, if you do join the blue envelope scheme or give by standing order, and you are also a tax payer, then we can claim an extra £2.50 for every £10 you give from HMRC – truly money for old rope !

The start of a new year is also a good time to review and maybe think about how much we can give. This may be particularly pertinent to those of us who pay by bank standing order because, whilst it is a regular and efficient outgoing from our bank accounts, we don’t have to think about it each month....and therein could lie the problem !

Thank you once again for your generosity each week, month and year – if you have any questions or want to chat through any options please do let me know.

*Chris Hill*

Treasurer

## **FUTURE OF THE MANSE**

At the end of the discussion on the future of the Manse at the Church Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> November, I promised to inform you as early as conveniently possible of the response that would be sent via Alex Mabbs to Synod. That response will be an appropriate extract from the Minutes of the meeting, as follows:

### Synod Proposal For Hove & Portslade Pastorate and Brighthelm URC To Exchange Manses

Lengthy discussion took place before the proposals from Synod, which are filed with these Minutes, were put to the vote.

It was generally agreed that the Hove & Portslade Pastorate Manse in Goldstone Crescent was a more desirable property than the Brighthelm Manse in Braemore Road for reasons of location, size, facilities and, not least if a Minister had a young family, because of its position in the City's school catchment areas. It was considered vital that the vacant ministerial position should be made as attractive as possible in order to attract applicants and that the Manse would be an important part of the package being offered.

A large majority of those attending were agreed that a final decision on the long term "ownership" of the two Manses should be held in abeyance until a new Minister was called to the Pastorate and should then be made in the light of the respective needs of the two Ministers and their families. Alex Mabbs and his family should remain in the Goldstone Crescent Manse at least until that time.

It was suggested that Synod should be asked to ensure that the notice on the letting of the Braemore Road Manse should be kept to as short a period as possible to avoid delays on moving in when a new Minister was called.

*Voting on the two proposals was as follows:*

- (a) *On the proposal that Central URC Hove should give up all rights to 67 Goldstone Crescent and pass it over to The URC (Southern Synod) Trust Ltd: for 1, against 26, abstentions 7.*
- (b) *On the proposal that Central URC Hove should accept 22 Braemore Road as our new Pastoral Manse: for 1, against 26, abstentions 7.*

Tony Clark

## **CHRISTIAN BOOK CLUB.**

Our final meeting for 2013 saw a smaller than usual gathering to give our reactions to the Book of Micah. We comforted ourselves with the clichés, as is our wont, that quality not quantity counted and “Where one or two etc....” and by the end of the evening we had ensured that we had strictly adhered to the Book Club traditions which have evolved over the years. (Very important at this time of year.)

1. Chip had not read the book.
2. At least one person, who shall remain nameless, had read the wrong book. Well, Malachi and Micah do begin with the same letter and are both in the Old Testament! Not only had she read the wrong book but she had questioned our logic of including Matthew Ch. 1-4 as part of our reading because she, naturally, had been unable to make the connection. A shame really because she had so faithfully prepared and researched the background to the Malachi!
3. There was a teeth-clenchingly dreadful pun made about the book. And, as usual, it was made by a man, who did not have the bravado to deliver it himself, but sent it via his wife. (It will appear later in this article.)

One new addition to the evening’s discussion was that we all burst into song. Did you know that the way to learn the Books of the New Testament was to sing them to the tune of “The head that once was crowned with thorns”. We also tried other mnemonic singing but this was the most successful.

The trouble we had with Micah was that we came to study with various misconceptions already in our heads. We associated him with one of the readings in a service of Nine Lessons and Carols, so were expecting a sort of Christmassy feel good factor. Wrong. Anything but! We even had difficulty finding the “Christmas” verses.

Secondly, most of what he is saying we had already read in the other books of the minor prophets. The people were misbehaving in the most appalling ways; their priests and princes were leading even more debauched and evil lives and all of them were disobeying God. Unless they changed their lives around God would punish them terribly. The nation would be slain, captured and dispersed.

The strongest verse in the Book is undoubtedly:

*“He has shown you, O man, what is good;  
and what doth the Lord require of you  
but to do justice, and to love kindness  
and to walk humbly with your God.”*

*Ch.6 v8.*

Micah lived at the same time as Isaiah and we all felt that Isaiah had prophesied many similar things but had also promised redemption and the coming of a Saviour in a much more poetical and hopeful style. We kept finding sections and phrases that we could not help but feel had been taken from Isaiah or from the other prophets. We recognised various sentences, we realised, from anthems, hymns etc but had never associated them with Micah, frequently with Isaiah and occasionally with other parts of the Bible.

So, were we for Micah, or against him? Regretfully, I must admit, indifferent.

We also had read the opening chapters of Matthew – Ch 1-4) where we can see the prophets' telling of the coming of a Saviour being fulfilled. Once again, Isaiah won.

To be fair, we understand that there may be more to Micah than we found. There is a suggestion that Micah was a kind of James Bond character and that some of his words are in fact a code to avoid detection of a hidden meaning but we did not have time to go into this in detail.

Our next meeting will be on January 27<sup>th</sup>, when the book under review is “Major Pettigrew’s Last Stand”, which we are assured is “quirky”. Chip Dunn is the hostess and we will be delighted to welcome new members.

## **HELP WANTED**

**To decorate the church on Saturday 21st December .**

**Please come for as short or long a time as you can spare from  
10.00 am.**

## **CHRISTMAS COMES BUT ONCE A YEAR!**

Are you ready? Have you made the Christmas Cake and the Christmas Pudding? If you haven't made the latter then you are behind by a week.

Last Sunday, the one before Advent, was Stir Up Sunday, when the pudding should have been made.

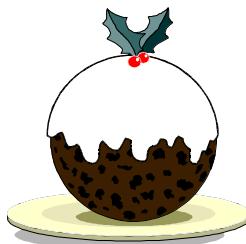
The term comes from the Collect for the Day in the Book of Common Prayer.

*“ Stir up we beseech Thee, O Lord, the wills of Thy faithful people; that they plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works may be plenteously rewarded; though Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”*

Everyone in the family should help to stir the pudding mixture and make a wish whilst doing so BUT they should stir from East to West in honour of the Three Wise Men.

There should be 13 ingredients in the pudding to represent Jesus and His disciples.

The flaming brandy poured over a Christmas Pudding symbolises Christ's Passion.



On to the mince pies, although it is rather early to be making them yet.

Do you enjoy them? Well then, eat as many as you can because the more you eat; the more good luck you will have in the New Year. That is, provided you simply bite into them or break them up with your fingers.

Apparently, if you use a knife or fork you will cut away all that luck.

One more word of warning. If you eat mince pies you could find yourself in trouble with the law. Oliver Cromwell banned them in the 17th century and no one has ever got round to repealing that law!

Enjoy your Christmas.

## **Southern Synod**

12th November 2013

Dear Friends,

*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in the land of deep darkness - on them light has shined. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*

Last night as I was driving home from church (in mid November) I was struck by the number of homes that had Christmas lights strung and brilliantly lit. There were houses with Santas (more than one!) and houses with stars and bells and reindeers and a plethora of angels, all flashing like beacons in the darkness. It gives new meaning to the phrase ‘your Christmases have come early this year’.

As I drove on I wondered why there are so many lights so early this year? And what kind of people live in the houses behind those lights? Did those lights illuminate the homes of both those who did and did not proclaim Jesus as the Christ-child?

I would like to believe that the lights that I saw were expressions of defiance in the face of dark times whether it be poverty at home, or earthquakes in China and flooding in the Philippines not to mention war and rumours of war that still encircle our world. I would like to believe that they are tangible statements that when all is increasingly dark there is always hope. I would like to believe that they are an attempt on the part of believers and non-believers alike to affirm that, at this Christmastime, there is goodness and tidings of great joy to be had.

We all need to defy the darkness. We all need hope. For me, the lights of Christmas provide this. Even as I get older the anticipation of the birth of the Christ-child grows. I find it so exciting to prepare for Christmas by hanging lights and decorating trees and preparing gifts for those you love. I drive my husband mad! But I find it even more exciting knowing that the reason for my eagerness is that a time is coming when the whole world will have hope. It is because of the birth of the Light of the World at the first Christmas. It is because of his life, death and resurrection and his promise to come again. It is because he is present in

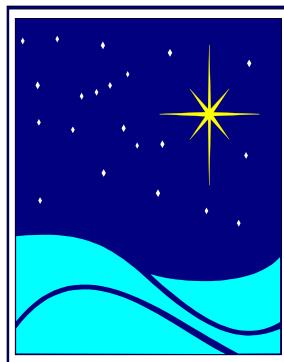
the hearts of all those who believe in him through his Spirit that the world can have hope and change and be at peace.

The growth of food banks in our local churches working in co-operation with local authorities, the increasing numbers of people involved in Street Pastors, those supporting the homeless through night shelters are all testament to the fact that our world is hopeful. The light of the world has truly come!

May His light shine from your homes this Christmastime and in all the seasons of your days.

Christmas Blessings,

Nicola Furley—Smith



The light of the Christmas Star to you  
The warmth of home and hearth to you  
The cheer of good will of friends to you  
The hope of a childlike heart to you  
The joy of a thousand angels to you  
The love of the Son and God's peace to you.

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

**2014**

### **COFFEE MORNINGS**

February 15 <sup>th</sup>	Social Activities Committee (Funds for Spring Supper)
March 15 <sup>th</sup>	Cake Stall
September 6 <sup>th</sup>	Social Activities Committee (Funds for Harvest Supper)
October 18 <sup>th</sup>	Book Stall
November 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Boys' Brigade

### **SUPPERS**

April 26 <sup>th</sup>	Spring Supper
September 20 <sup>th</sup>	Harvest Supper

### **FAIRS**

June 7 <sup>th</sup>	Summer Fair
December 6 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas Fair

## **CENTRAL'S COPYRIGHT LICENCES**

This is key standard information, like telephone numbers - don't forget what you have to do if you're:

**(a)** ....reproducing (by typing) song words (eg in notices, separate song sheets or for the overhead projector) you need to include at the foot of each song the following details:

*Author, © Year, © Owner, CCL licence number 12011*

...and **inform** Chris Hill for the records. If you don't have some of the information, try Chris or Sheena, they may be able to help !

**(b)**....photocopying words out of a book then you have to acknowledge at the foot of the photocopy the following details:

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# **CENTRAL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HOVE**

Corner of Ventnor Villas and Blatchington Road, Hove

Church Hall Telephone: 01273 734162

[www.centralurchove.com](http://www.centralurchove.com)

## *MINISTER*

Rev. Alex Mabbs

(Day off: Friday)

## *ASSOCIATE MINISTER*

Rev. Roger Wood

(Day off: Thursday)

## *SECRETARY*

Mrs. S. Ireland

## *TREASURER*

Mr. C. Hill

## *COVENANT & FREEWILL OFFERING SECRETARY*

Refer: Secretary/Treasurer

## *ORGANIST & CHOIR MASTER*

Dr. A. Ireland

## *BUILDING HALL(S) HIRE*

Mrs Celia Elliott

## *MAGAZINE EDITOR*

Mrs. R. Brice

## *SUNDAY SERVICES*

10.30 a.m.

MORNING WORSHIP

with Youth and Children's Ministry

6.30 p.m.

EVENING WORSHIP

HOLY COMMUNION

First Sunday of the month at 10.30 a.m.

Third Sunday of the month at 6.30 p.m.