

# **The Drive Methodist Church**

**Eastern Avenue Ilford IG13PP**

## **Newsletter**

**December 2022**



**Minister Reverend Mmasape Zihle**

**[mmasape.zihle@methodist.org.uk](mailto:mmasape.zihle@methodist.org.uk)**

**[www.drive-methodist.church](http://www.drive-methodist.church)**

## **Church Mission Statement of The Drive Methodist Church**

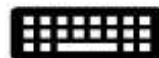
The Drive Methodist Church aims to be faithful to the commandments of Jesus, and the calling of the Methodist Church.

The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission, and to fulfil the promises detailed in the Methodist worship book.

Provide a weekly opportunity for all people to worship God in Christ, here at The Drive Methodist Church.

Enable people to grow and learn as Christians through mutual support and care.

Be a good neighbour to the immediate and wider community. Sharing our faith with others through pastoral care, church activities and communication.



### Wishing for a Merry Christmas

**“It was the night before Christmas, when all through the house, not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse...”**

These opening lines of the poem taken from the story A visit by St. Nicholas, I first heard on a TV movie where a grandparent had gathered all the grandchildren around a beautifully decorated fireplace, a huge Christmas tree twinkling in a corner and snow falling outside, seen through the window. It created for me a peaceful and beautiful image of Christmas.

Years later, I have come to appreciate how easy it is for many of us to romanticise Christmas; what with all the Christmas movies on tv with everything perfectly falling into place at the right time.

If only it were so in the real world.

The first Christmas, was nothing like the perfect pictures in our minds or on tv. Young Mary (highly pregnant) and Joseph had to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem for a mandatory census; the town was heaving with people and there was no place for them to stay.

.In the night, the pangs of labour begun, and all an inn-keeper could offer them was a dirty and possibly smelly animal shed. We are not told If there were midwives in attendance, yet we know that the child was not clothed in cute baby clothes, but wrapped in swaddling cloth. I can't begin to imagine how Mary felt being far from home. After the visits of the shepherds and the singing bright angels and the Magi's visit; we hear how this young family has to flee to Egypt to escape persecution.

Certainly this is not a warm cosy time.

And this is the story of so many in our world and here in our county as many who are hard hit by lack of income will not have much to be merry about. The many refugees who have had to escape wars or famine in their countries and are finding to place to stay will certainly not be merry. There will be those who once again this will be a lonely time as once more they spend Christmas on their own, or those for whom this will be the first Christmas after a loss of a loved one and there will be an empty seat at the table where that person used to be.

Yet this I know is true... Our Lord Jesus was born into a struggling world and not in a palace, but in a stable, so we

can be assured of a God who shares in and understands our struggles not just at Christmas but in our everyday lives. God is with us!

I am wishing for a merry Christmas where all God's people will extend a hand of generosity to others, by adding an item to the foodbank, giving to charities that offer shelter and food to those without, by inviting a lonely neighbour to feel the warmth of fellowship around our tables.

I wish for a merry Christmas where all of our hope will be renewed in the promise of the coming of Christ as the Prince of Peace, a wonderful councillor and the redeemer of the world.

May all your hearts be filled with joy as you join in the carol singing, as you welcome once more Christ this Christmas, and whether you are travelling or staying in, may you be safe.

Merry Christmas

***Mmasape***





## Church Family News

We offer our prayers for :

**Sandra Runeckles** who has recently been in hospital

**Rochelle** who has been diagnosed with Long Covid.

**Janet Brunnen** who is nursing a fractured wrist.

**Kathleen Taylor** who is currently in Queens hospital

**Josie Jiggins** who is well cared for at home

**Reverend Mmasape** who has intermittent discomfort with a painful hip

We also remember those who are grieving and those who provide love, care and support to others.

**WARM GREETINGS** to those who are no longer able to get to church.

Peter Mitchell, Josie Jiggins, Marlene Henry, Doreen Barclay

We think of you often and miss seeing you.

### **Belated birthday wishes to:**

Andy Wright who celebrated his 60th birthday on 16th November and to Rochelle who celebrated her 20th birthday on 21st November



### **DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS ARE:**

*Lorraine Bendon 3rd Dec*

*Reverend Bernadino 21st Dec*

*Jo Wright, 30th Dec*

*Fumi 30th Dec*

***Happy Birthday Everyone***

This months Communion Collection will be donated to  
**Haven House Children's Hospice**

### **An invite from Barkingside**

You are invited to join Barkingside Church for their annual Carol Service at 4.30pm on Sunday 11th December.

It is hoped that congregations from Gants Hill and The Drive will join them,

## **Prayers by and for Children**

### **Dear Jesus,**

I know I'm very blessed today, spending time with my family, having a yummy dinner, and getting to open presents, but I know there are many people who won't get those things today. Please send them lots of blessings, and let them know that someone is thinking about them on Christmas. Help me see how I can bless other people, too!

In Jesus' name, I pray, Amen.

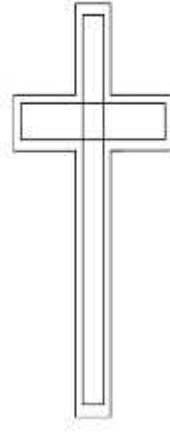
### **Dear Lord,**

I pray that this Christmas is celebrated with a heart filled with peace and love. Please take away all the bad feelings and emotions in people, and show them what Christmas is all about. I also pray for the people who are having a hard time this Christmas. Please hug them and let them feel Your peace and love.

Amen.



**.Don't struggle alone**  
**Help and Support is available**



Are you struggling to manage?

Are you worried about providing for  
yourself or your family?

Do you know of someone who needs  
help and support?

**Contact Reverend Mmasape** who will help you and provide confidential support.

[mmasape.zihle@methodist.org.uk](mailto:mmasape.zihle@methodist.org.uk)

**Christians Against Poverty CAP**

**Do you need help with debt**

Debt Coaches at London Ilford Debt Centre:

**Fumi Popoola-Akintemi**      Debt Coach

**Call 0800 328 0006**

**George Ajanlekoko**      Debt Coach

**Call 0800 328 0006**

**Warm This Winter  
London Rally  
Methodist Central Hall  
3rd Dec 10.30–1pm**

**No one should be living in fuel poverty. We're rallying in London to demand action from this government to keep us all warm this winter!**

This winter, 7 million households will be living in fuel poverty. It doesn't have to be this way. Warm This Winter is a campaign made up of some the UK's leading charities, working with community groups, MPs and others, to make sure the government acts to lower energy bills now and in the future.

Join us in Westminster as people share their own experiences of the energy and cost of living crisis, hear from politicians and public figures, and show that we are united in demanding better.

) **Arrival, Methodist Central Hall** - from 10.30am  
Come in for a cup of tea or coffee, learn more about the campaign, and get involved! There will be:

) **Film screening:** a short film (10 mins) on fuel poverty from Greenpeace

) **People's Exhibition:** photos and testimonials from those facing fuel poverty including templates and materials to add your own experiences.

) **Scarf - knotting:** we'll work together to knot 100+ orange scarves into one big one to use outside as a symbol of our demand to be warm this winter  
fuel poverty!

) **Photo stunt, Parliament Square - 11am**  
We'll gather outside in Parliament Square (about a 5 minute walk from the hall) with a banner, placards, and the newly knotted giant scarf to wrap around everybody, and we'll take some photos.

### **Rally, Methodist Central Hall – 11.30-12.15**

We'll head back to the hall to hear from more speakers, take simple online actions together, and for a further opportunity to contribute to the People's Exhibition.

Everybody is welcome, so whether this is your first rally or your fiftieth, come along and join in as we take action together against

*To learn more about the Warm This Winter campaign demands, visit [www.warmthiswinter.org.uk](http://www.warmthiswinter.org.uk)*



# Christmas Extravaganza!

Saturday 3rd December

This Christmas we wish to share the joy of giving by raising money for the Yemen Crisis Appeal

Join us for a host of fun activities like:

The Chocolate Santa Hunt

Facepainting

Gingerbread Decorating

Arts and Crafts

and so much more!

If you're looking for a more relaxed time, we've got that covered too. There's plenty of tea and mince pies to go around!

Sign up using the QR code to let us know you're coming.

We look forward to seeing you at

The Drive Methodist Church, Ilford IG1 3PP

From 10.30 - 12.30 PM

Scan Here to sign up!





**The New Essex Choir  
presents:**

## ***A Christmas Farrago***

**5.30pm on 10th December at  
The Drive Methodist Church**

**Tickets:**

Standard: £12

Concessions: £10

Children under 16 free

**Ticket enquiries:**

0208 500 5303

[www.newessexchoir.org.uk](http://www.newessexchoir.org.uk)



**Do you enjoy singing?**

Have you thought about joining a choir?

Contact us on: [newessexchoral.org.uk/join-us](http://newessexchoral.org.uk/join-us)

tel: 0208 550 5303

## **What's on at Wesley's ?**

### **GEORGIAN TEA ROOM Friday 2nd Dec. 11am—3pm**

Treat yourself and enjoy some festive spirit at Wesley's Chapel's Christmas themed Georgian tea room, where Georgian re-enactors will be serving delicious cake and tea in the Radnor Hall. Entry is free, with donations for tea and cake. Please note that booking is not required, however, entrance is on a first come, first served basis.



### **GEORGIAN CHRISTMAS EVENING**

#### **Wednesday 14TH DEC. 5.30PM—7PM**

See John Wesley's House in a new light after hours and enjoy the festivities of an 18th century Christmas. The House will be full of festive sights and sounds; Flauguissimo Duo will be performing chamber music as a backdrop to the evening and there will be seasonal activities in the Preacher's Room. Entry is free and attendees are welcome to drop in.

The museum of Methodism and John Wesley House

## **DEVELOPING YOUTH PARTICIPATION**

A WEBINAR—12TH DECEMBER 7PM—9PM ON ZOOM

Participation is about everybody, not just children and young people. It's part of the Methodist Church's bigger vision to see the whole Church participating more; making and moulding the shape and substance of the church, together.

This equipping webinar is based on the Voice Activated Resources (produced by the Well) this interactive workshop will take attendees through the theories behind youth participation, equipping them with the knowledge and techniques to enable them to empower children and young people in the decision-making process of your church or project. FOR INFORMATION SEE - Methodist website

## **SAMARITAN SHOEBOX APPEAL**

Thanks to Brian Grinham for masterminding the Samaritan Shoebox appeal in our church and also arranging for their delivery to a collection depot.

In all, 60 were delivered and 40 of these were generously donated by our Pre school.

Thanks to all who supported this appeal.

# *The Nativity and Toy Service*

*11th December. 11.15am*



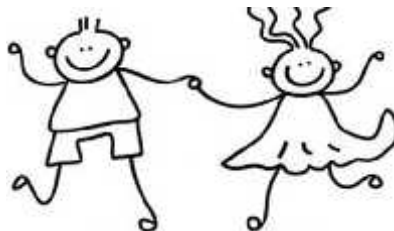
*What is a Toy Service?*

*Traditionally, toys, books, games and toiletries are donated and passed on to organisations who care for under privileged children.*

*For over 2 decades Loughton and subsequently Harlow Family Centres benefitted from the generous donations of toys and gifts from The Drive.*

*Over the years, the giving of toys has reduced somewhat, however many are still happy to donate money for toys to be purchased.*

*This year any donations of toys, gifts and money will be passed on to a children's charity.*



# THE DRIVE CHRISTMAS CANDLE LIGHT CAROL SERVICE



## ***Candlelight Carol Service 18th December 6.30pm***

*Yes, it's time again for our wonderful Candle Light Carol Service of nine lessons and carols.*

*The church will be beautifully decorated.*

*Andrew will be poised at the organ to create joyous music*

*The choir will be in good voice and looking splendid in their red robes.*

*Come and worship in anticipation of our Christs birth.*

*Enjoy some Christmas refreshment's after the service with songs around the piano.*

*Do come and bring your family and friends*

Andrew Taylor

## CAROL OF THE BELLS



If you have seen the 1990 film *Home Alone* or indeed watched any Christmas adverts on the TV in recent years, you will have heard the *Carol of the Bells*, with its famous repetitive four-note motif.

It was only recently that I learned of its origins in Ukraine.

Arranged by composer Mykola Leontovych and first performed in 1916, the music is based on a Ukrainian folk song and was originally conceived as a New Year Song. It gained popularity in the USA, with the English words (*Hark! how the bells*) being added in 1936 by Peter J Wilhousky. The original choir version has been rearranged several times over the years for various combinations of singers and instrumentalists.

If you want to hear a live rendition of *Carol of the Bells*, come to our Carol Service in church at 6:30pm on Sunday 18 December (you'll have time to watch England win the World Cup before you come to church in the evening!). Given the current circumstances in Ukraine, it seems appropriate to include it this year.

**Andrew.**

## **VALENTINE SINGERS**

### **CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

A feast of seasonal music  
with carols for everyone to join in

**Friday 16 December at 7:30pm**

at Church of the Assumption,

98 Manford Way, Hainault, Essex IG7 4DF

£11 (£5 students/benefit holders) (buy in advance - £13/£7  
on the door!)

Free admission for under 16s!

Seasonal refreshments provided,  
with donations in aid of the Redbridge Food Bank

**phone 020 8550 4654 or visit our website**

[valentinesingers.org](http://valentinesingers.org)

or see Andrew Taylor

*You can also catch the Valentine Singers at  
the Victorian Christmas Fair at Valentines Mansion  
Sunday 4 December at around 12:45 and 1:30*



## THE BIG SING

Have you ever heard The Drive choir sing “ubi caritas et amor” and wondered what it was all about?

Have you ever wondered who Ebenezer was in “Here I raise my Ebenezer”?

If so, “THE BIG SING” could be for you. The emphasis is on POP SONGS and SIMPLE REPETITIVE LYRICS.

I went to the first free session on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> November at City Gates, Clements Road, Ilford. This is where we have the Wednesday coffee morning. ( Newsletter and Weekly Events Sheet which is handed to you with your hymn book)

You pay £7 for each session you attend, instead of a fee for a term or a year. All communication is made by modern technology.

Joseph is an excellent teacher, keeping everyone’s interest and getting the best out of the singers. Instead of being given a score, singers follow the words on their mobile phones.

Please ask me if you need more details or see the poster on the notice board in the church Foyer. On 21st Dec the Big Sing is giving a Christmas Concert at The Brentwood Centre

**Susan Ruckes**

*Thanks Sue, I hope your plug for the Big Sing encourages others. LB*

## **A Prayer for Yemen**

**Giver of Life**, who hears the cries from Yemen;  
of mothers choosing between medicine or food,  
of parents grieving children lost to starvation,  
of those who have given up everything in hunger.  
Hear our cries for hope, for change, for peace.

**In your mercy**, break political deadlocks,  
soften hardened hearts, change closed minds,  
open unhearing ears. Let people come before power.  
Let life be holy again. Let your justice and peace  
shape the nation of Yemen  
and the lives of all people.

Amen.

## **Bible Reading Group**



The Bible Reading Group has been meeting this last year but at first on zoom and then in the Gardeners Cafe and more recently in our home where we first began the group.

Reading through whole books and longer sections of the Bible at home has been an interesting and rewarding experience. When we meet to discuss what we have been reading there has always been plenty to be shared.

We have read about Joseph, the one with the many coloured coat and the exploits of David, Micah, Daniel and selections from the Gospel of John. We have also read the letters of the Apostles Peter and John and Some of Paul's writings. So a wide range of scripture.

We have had six members meeting regularly until Colin moved away and gracefully bowed out leaving five of us. Our format has as always been that of a book club. We ask, was it a good read? Anyone may comment on what they have read and there are no experts. So it is not a bible study as usually understood. That is why we have called it the Bible Reading Group.

We intend to continue meeting for as long as folk want to and would welcome new members. The group meets once a month often on the last Friday of the month. The December meeting is postponed to early in January because of Christmas. So there are two meetings in January.

**Best wishes, Jan and John**

***Thank you Jan and John for providing this group. LB***

## THE SATURDAY LUNCH

Ruth, Anne, Sandra, Lorraine and Peter would like to thank all who support this event.

As there are so many activities and services taking place in December, we thought it best to wait and enjoy a good New Year Lunch when we can share all our Christmas news. **So keep Saturday 7th January free.**

As you know, we endeavour to keep costs low in order not to exclude anybody who may wish to join in.

We would really like any ideas you may have for meals we could make for you to enjoy.

### **Brian's Musings.....**

Don't live for your presence, but for your absence to be felt"

**Kim Mae**

" I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it.

The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers his fear."

**Nelson Mandela**

## **DID YOU KNOW ?**

### **The Twelve Days of Christmas**

**On the first day** of Christmas, my true love (God) gave to me, a partridge (Jesus Christ) in a pear tree.

**Second day:** Two turtle doves were the Old and New Testaments.

**Third day:** Three French hens represented the three gifts of faith, hope and love.

**Fourth day:** Calling birds were the four gospels.

**Fifth day:** Five golden rings were the Books of Moses.

**Sixth day:** Geese a-laying represents the six days of creation.

**Seventh day:** Swans a-swimming were the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.

**Eighth day:** Maids a-milking were the eight beatitudes.

**Ninth day:** Ladies dancing were the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit such as charity, peace and kindness.

**Tenth day:** Lords a-leaping represent the Ten Commandments.

**Eleventh day:** Pipers piping were the eleven Apostles.

**Twelfth day:** Twelve drummers drumming represented the points of the Apostles Creed.

OR .....DO YOU KNOW DIFFERENT ?

## ***Thank You Thank you Thank You Thank You***

A Big Thank you to Brian, Mmasape, John and Jan, Bambo and now Hilary who all make up The Drive Together What's App Prayer Team. We are grateful to wake up each morning with a thoughtful prayer to see us through our day.

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### **STEPHEN NORMANTON**

#### **Stephen's PeerTalk Wing Walk update**

Those of you who have kindly sponsored Stephen via his JustGiving page may wish to know that the event has been postponed. But it will still go ahead! The plane needed a spare part which would take some weeks to arrive meaning the season for wing walks had closed. Stephen has now been given a slot for his brave effort on Saturday 1st April 2023!

You can find the full story and details about PeerTalk at <https://www.justgiving.com/peertalk>

Stephen was a former Minister at The Drive.

*Thanks for the update Diane, interesting date! LB*

## **My Most Memorable Christmas**

It took place about mid December about 30 years ago when my Mum suddenly went into a diabetic coma although she was an undiagnosed diabetic. She had been poorly with an infection for a week for which the GP gave her antibiotics & she seemed to be getting better but suddenly took a turn for the worse.

On the Saturday evening, having slept for most of the day, we suddenly realised that she wasn't responding to what we were saying so called the GP who called an ambulance & she was rushed into hospital in Barking, where they worked on her for 3 hours and at midnight, a doctor told us she was in a diabetic coma and probably wouldn't survive the night, but if she did, she would probably have severe brain damage.

A normal blood sugar level is between 4 – 9 and hers was 37!! Dad sat with her and I called the family to come immediately. She survived the night, the family arrived and we sorted out a rota for them to be with her and keep talking.

One evening when she had been in a coma for about 2 days, my sisters and I were sitting around her bed and chatting when one said she couldn't remember Mum & Dad ever arguing.

I said I did as I lived closer & told them about the occasion when they "had words" whether

the fish pond in the garden should stay as it was (Dad's preference) or change into a rockery (Mum's preference). Mum finally pulled rank and said "Stanley , (it was always his full name when she wanted her way) that is going to be a rockery, even if you have to be underneath it"

We all laughed and Mum joined in with the laughter, even though she was in a coma! I said "You can hear me, can't you? So, to check, I think you know one of the things I've inherited from you is incredibly ticklish feet so I'm going to tickle your feet. I walked my hands down the bed towards her feet and as I got closer, she moved her feet away!!

She came out of the coma 3 days later with no brain damage and was in hospital for a month including Christmas. We all felt it was such a miracle that she had come through this that we decided this was going to be her Christmas.

Given that we were all spending so much time at the hospital, no-one had time to get any gifts, so we agreed to just give presents to Mum on Christmas Day, no-one else, just her!!

She was with us for another 5 years before we lost her 25 years ago but those years were a wonderful bonus. You don't always appreciate what you have until you come so close to losing it, do you?

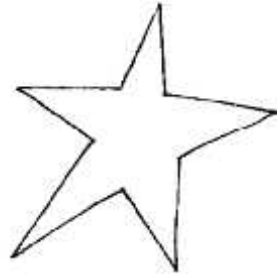
**Ruth Joyce.** Thank you Ruth, Bless your Mum and Dad.....memorable indeed! LB

## Colour in the Christmas Jumper



### ***Lets Sing a Carol***

*Come and join the celebration,  
It's a very special day;  
Come and share our jubilation  
There's a new King born today*



See the shepherds hurry down to Bethlehem,  
gaze in wonder at the son of God who lay before them:

*Come and join the celebration,  
It's a very special day;  
Come and share our jubilation  
There's a new King born today*

Wise men journey, led to worship by a star,  
kneel in homage, bringing precious gifts from lands afar, so,

### *Chorus*

‘God is with us, round the world the message bring,  
He is with us, ‘Welcome,’ all the bells on earth are pealing

### *Chorus*

*Valerie Collinson (b 1933)*

## THE ARRIVAL OF ST NICHOLAS

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house  
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.  
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,  
In hopes that St Nicholas soon would be there.

The children were nestled all snug in their beds,  
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads.  
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,  
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap.

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,  
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.  
Away to the window I flew like a flash,  
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow  
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below.  
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,  
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer.



With a little old driver, so lively and quick,  
I knew in a moment it must be St Nick.  
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,  
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name!

"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen!  
On, Comet! On, Cupid! on, Donner and Blitzen!  
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!  
Now dash away! Dash away! Dash away all!"

As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,  
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky.  
So up to the house-top the coursers they flew,  
With the sleigh full of Toys, and St Nicholas too.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof  
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.  
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,  
Down the chimney St Nicholas came with a bound.



He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,  
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot.  
A bundle of Toys he had flung on his back,  
And he looked like a peddler, just opening his pack.

His eyes-how they twinkled! his dimples how merry!  
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!  
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,  
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow.



The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,  
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath.  
He had a broad face and a little round belly,  
That shook when he laughed, like a bowlful of jelly!

He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,  
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself!  
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,  
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,  
And filled all the stockings, then turned with a jerk.  
And laying his finger aside of his nose,  
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose!

He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,  
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.  
But I heard him exclaim, 'ere he drove out of sight,"Happy  
Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!"



## Christmas Past and Present Quiz



1. What was an 'Ashen Faggot', commonly made on Christmas Eve in the West Country?

**A. A cake, B. A bundle of sticks, C. A wreath, D. A drink**

2. During the 1600s, what did people go from door-to-door offering their neighbours at Christmas?

**A. Chocolate, B. Hot Cider, C. Beer, D. Sherry**

3. Which of these ingredients does not go into an Egg-Hot, a drink hailing from Devon.

**A. Cider, B. Egg Yolks, C. Brandy, D. Spices**

4. How much did one of the first ever Christmas cards sell for in 2014?

**A. £6,000, B. £7, 512, C. £8,469, £9,167**

5. How much does Paul McCartney earn each year from his Christmas song, Wonderful Christmas Time?

**A. £250,000, B. .£50,000, C. £500,000), D. £1.2 million**

6. According to Facebook when is the most popular day of the festive season to split up with a partner?

- A. On Christmas Eve, B. The day after boxing day  
C. Two weeks before Christmas, D. December 1<sup>st</sup>**

7. For a Christmas to be classed as 'White', how many snowflakes need to drop on the Met Office HQ in the day?

- A. a bucket full, B. one, C, 100 D. snow all day**

8. Which sells more in England each year?

- A. Artificial B. real Christmas trees?**

9. Who was crowned King of England on Christmas Day 1066?

10. When do Harrods typically open their Christmas department each year?

- A. October, B. September, C. July**

**Answers can be found on page 39**

## **END OF AN ERA**

It was with great sadness, although not unexpected, that I learnt at the Church Council on 9<sup>th</sup> November that the Drive Scout and Guide Group had ceased to exist with the closure of the last surviving section, The Cub Pack.

Having joined the cubs 80 years ago and been involved with the Group for a large part on my life, as a member, an Assistant Scout Leader, Scout Leader, Group Scout Leader, Chairman of Group Executive and, since I handed my warrant, Group Life President. It feels strange being a Life President of a non-existent Scout and Guide Group.

The fact that the Group kept going for all those years, is largely due to the long, loyal, and dedicated service of a few leaders. The Scouts and Cubs have, over the years, been served by, John and Audrey Taylor, Jeremy and Diane Foster, Mike Seviour, Colin Runeckles, Peter and Lorraine Bendon, Ian Warden and, over several years my wife Pat. John Higgins has also been a non-uniformed helper for 15 years.

The Guides and Brownies long term leaders include Anne Warden, Jo Wright, Sandra Runeckles, Barbara Nacarro, Kaye Mawson (now Merrywest), Rosemary Smith, Anne Dellow and Pam Murphy.

We have also had many other leaders for shorter periods of time, too many to mention but for whom we are so grateful for their help in maintaining the group and giving a great induction to Scouting and Guiding to hundreds of young people who have passed through the Group.

There are also many other people involved with the Group in a non-uniformed capacity. Peter Foster was Group Chairman, then Treasurer for many years after Bert Runeckles took over as Group Chairman. Our current Group Secretary, who is still active in helping deal with the closing of the Group, Andy Marriott, has been with us for 20 years.

We also had, for several years, a catering committee which organised our Annual General Meeting dinners for a few years where we entertained and fed around 80 people.

The Scouts and Guides were formed at the Church in 1928 so we have not quite made our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

**Brian Grinham.**

**So much dedication for so long. In order to celebrate the achievements of so many, we hope to plan an event .**

**Watch this space! LB**

**If you have a memory of being part of the Scout and Guide Group as a young person or a leader—we want to hear your stories.**

## **.Valentines Park - Covid Memorial Garden**

Redbridge Council invited local people to the unveiling of a plaque to remember all those in Redbridge lost to and were affected by Covid-19.

The council held a short tribute at 11am on Saturday 26th November, at the Redbridge Covid-19 Memorial Garden near the Valentines Park Bandstand, accessible via the Cranbrook Road park entrance.

It is hoped, the Memorial Garden, with its trail containing hundreds of memorial stones will serve as a fitting and long-lasting memorial to the hundreds of local people who sadly passed away during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Local people are invited to make their own tribute by writing on the memorial stones which form part of this permanent site.

**Valentines Park officially recognised as one of the nations top ten favourite parks .**

**The Peoples Choice Award.** Almost 18,000 members of the public took part in the vote to officially recognise Valentines Park and nine other high-quality green spaces as their favourite Green Flag Award park.

The news that Valentines Park has achieved a People's Choice Award comes after research conducted by Keep Britain Tidy shows that for parks to be able to contribute to improvements in health and wellbeing, they must be accessible, well-managed and maintained and offer something for everyone within the community.

Such good news that our lovely park has been recognised.  
LB

# **SUPPORT OUR LOCAL FOODBANKS**

## **Helping Local People in Crisis**

### **THANK YOU FOR BRINGING A TIN TO CHURCH EACH SUNDAY ?**

We have delivered a substantial amount of food to the Food Bank thanks to your donations.

#### **Free Food**

Well done to Morrisons— in a collaboration with Heinz beans, Morrisons are providing anyone who in need with a free meal. They need only to 'ask for Henry' ( no questions asked) at the counter in their café. This will continue as long as stocks last.

#### **Free Sanitary products**

Also, if you are in need or struggling for sanitary products go to Morrisons customer service kiosk (Next to Timpsons) and ask for a package that 'SANDY has left for you'. You will then be given a FREE discreet envelope with what you need no questions asked.

#### **Answers to Christmas Past and Present Quiz**

1. B, bundle of sticks
2. B, Hot cider
3. C, Brandy
4. £8,469
5. A, £250,000
6. C, 2 weeks before Christmas
7. One
8. Real
9. William the Conqueror
10. July

**Samaritans.** To talk about anything that is upsetting you, you can contact Samaritans 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. You can call 116 123 (free from any phone), email jo@samaritans.org

**SANeline.** If you're experiencing a mental health problem or supporting someone else, you can call **SANeline on 0300 304 7000** (4.30pm–10.30pm every day).

### **ChildLine**

Free confidential service to help young people under 19 with any issue they are going through.

**Helpline: 0800 1111**

### **Family Lives (previously known as Parent line)**

Offers information, advice, guidance and support on any aspect of parenting and family life, including bullying.

**Helpline: 0808 800 2222**

### **The Mix**

The Mix's Crisis Messenger text service 24/7 and open to anyone aged 25 or under living in the UK. If you're in crisis and need to talk, text **THEMIX to 85258**.

Webchat and Helpline service for free and confidential information and help on a wide range of issues for 13 to 25 year olds. All issues.

**Helpline: 0800 808 4994**

## **CARERS UK**

Information advice and support for people who are looking after a friend or family member.

**Advice line: 0808 808 7777**

**Disability Rights UK** Information and advice on a wide range of issues for disabled people.

**Disabled Students Helpline: 0800 328 5050**

**Personal Budgets Helpline: 0300 555 152**

**24-hour National Domestic Violence** A national service for women experiencing domestic violence or others calling on their behalf.

**Helpline: 0808 2000 247**

**Refuge - Help for Teenage Girls**

Information and advice on violence against teenage girls and young women.

**Helpline: 0808 2000 247 Advice line: 0808 801 0660**

**Men's advice line** Free advice and support for men experiencing domestic violence and abuse .

**Helpline: 0808 801 0327**

**AL-ANON Helpline: 020 7403 0888 (10am-10pm)** For families affected by alcohol abuse

## A Christmas Blessing



May you be filled with the wonder of Mary,

the obedience of Joseph,

the joy of the angels,

the eagerness of the shepherds,

the determination of the magi,

and the peace of the Christ child.

Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit

bless you now and forever." Amen

## **CHURCH DIARY FOR December**

**3rd December TDY— Christmas Extravaganza  
10.30am—12.30pm in the Church Hall.**

**4th December 2nd Sunday in Advent  
11.15am - Sunday Worship with HC led by Rev.  
Mmasape Zihle**

**10th December—New Essex Choir Christmas Concert  
The Drive Methodist church 5.30pm**

**11th December 3rd Sunday in Advent  
Nativity and Toy Service. Led by Rev Mmasape Zihle**

**16th December 7.30pm Valentines Singers Christmas  
Concert see page 19 for details.**

**18th December 4th Sunday in Advent 11.15am  
Morning service led by John Pearson.  
6.30pm Candlelight Carol Service**

**25th December Christmas Day morning service  
10.30am led by Rev. Mmasape Zihle**

## **Services every Sunday at 11.15am**

Communion Services as announced

**Senior Church Stewards:** Michelle Garner  
Diane Foster

**Property Steward Bookings** Jeremy Foster  
[bookings@drive-methodist.church](mailto:bookings@drive-methodist.church)

**Church Council Secretary:** Priya Inbakumar

**Music @ The Drive** Andrew Taylor

**Flower Rota Secretary** Anne Dellow

**The Drive Youth** Jo Wright

**Safeguarding @The Drive** Lorraine Bendon

**JMA Secretary:** Diane Foster

**Newsletter Editor:** Lorraine Bendon  
[newsletter@drive-methodist.church](mailto:newsletter@drive-methodist.church)

**Uniformed Organisations**

**Group Scout Leader:** Mr M Seviour

**Pre School:** Kay Whiddon

Term time only: Mon – Fri 9.15am -12pm, 1pm-3pm