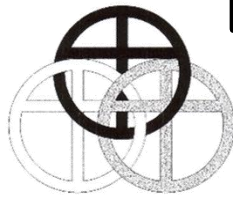


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**Bromsgrove
Methodist
Church
and Centre**



**December 2022 –
January 2023**

**Bromsgrove Methodist Church and Centre: encouraging,
supporting and developing followers of Jesus Christ and
sharing God's love in the wider community**

REGULAR SERVICES and KEY CONTACTS

SUNDAY

1 st	9.00 am	Holy Communion
	10.30 am	Morning Worship
2 nd	10.30 am	Morning Worship
3 rd	10.30 am	Morning Worship
4 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship

- Holy Communion at one 10.30 am service each month
- Evening Services at 6.00 pm on some Sundays
- Special Services as arranged.

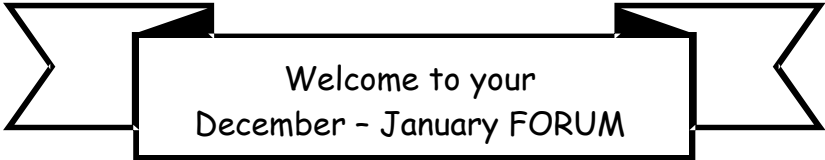
Please see the Centre Pages for full service details

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e-mail: bromsgroveroombookings@gmail.com

Find out more at www.bromsgrovemethodist.org.uk



Welcome to your December - January FORUM

What's inside...

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Material for FORUM to the Editor, Jim Buchanan, c/o Centre Office
or email: les.jim42@btinternet.com

*Opinions expressed are those of the writers and do not necessarily
represent the views of the Church at any level*

There is room

Each year in the traditional church calendar which commences on Advent Sunday we begin a new set of Bible readings. Running over a cycle of three years, one gospel takes priority throughout each year. From November 27th it will be Matthew. Given this is the December edition of Forum I thought I'd spend a little time exploring the Nativity according to Matthew. But then I realised most of our readers know all about it.

You will know the shepherds don't appear in this version of the story of the birth of Jesus, nor a census called by Roman authorities that requires travel to Bethlehem, nor a stable and manger scene. You will know that there is still a Joseph (who gets spoken to by an angel in a dream) and Mary, and Magi with their gifts who visit this Jesus in the house, and a bad King Herod who is greatly disturbed by the news. And there is also that bit we don't tend to cover much in family friendly nativity stories – the escape of the Holy Family to Egypt but the terrible murder of so many infants at the hands of that tyrant King. You will also know that in this story various names or titles are given relating to the coming child.

The name Jesus is itself related to a key anticipated role he will play – as one who saves. He is also Immanuel, Christ and King. There is quite a lot crammed into those forty verses (Matthew 1:18 – 2:23) and I daresay if you come to church during Advent and Christmas you will hear some of these themes explored in various ways.

The bit of the story that doesn't often get a covering is the very start of the story – all those begats in the King James Version! (Matthew 1:1-17). At first glance it is just a long list of names, some familiar and others obscure, which someone asked to do a reading at church will hope I don't get them to do. What is all that about?

It turns out if we will dig into it there is some quite fascinating insight in this perhaps unfamiliar and neglected passage. I may yet preach on it during Advent (you have been warned!?). One point of the list of names is to show that Jesus has the right pedigree and is of the right family line to be the one who can bring fulfilment of many of the promises of God to his people.

Another is that the list, Jesus' ancestry, isn't exactly made up entirely of fine upstanding male characters. Instead, it includes women (challenging the presumption that it is all about the male line), non-Jews (challenging the presumption that the story is all about those of Jewish heritage) and some decidedly dodgy characters (challenging the presumption that God only works through good and upright people.). One interpretation of this is that God is well able to involve anyone he chooses in his unfolding story of involvement in his world.

And that includes us!

The national Methodist Church is providing some materials for Advent and Christmas around the theme:

There is room.

methodist.org.uk/ThereIsRoom

I hope you who read this know that God has room for you in his story. I hope you also know that there is room and a welcome for you in the various activities and services taking place at Bromsgrove Methodist Church in this Advent and Christmas season.

And I hope that there is room in your story, and indeed your Christmas, for the church and Jesus.

Every Blessing
Rev Steve Levett



A Tale of Two Saints



St Nicholas Feast Day 6 December

St Nicholas was the bishop of Myra, in Asia Minor, in the fourth century. Lots of stories are told of his kindness and generosity.

He is the patron saint of Russia, children, scholars, merchants and sailors. One legend tells of his secret gifts to three daughters from a poor family. It is said he threw 3 purses of gold down the chimney where they landed in the girls' stockings which they had hung up to dry in front of the fire.

This is supposed to be the origin of hanging up Christmas stockings.

Over time the name of St Nicholas changed to Sinterklass and thus to Santa Claus in the Christmas celebrations.

St WULFSTAN Feast Day 19th January

St Wulfstan was Bishop of Worcester from 1062-95. He lived during the Norman Conquest of England and was the only Saxon bishop to remain under William the Conqueror.

Wulfstan was a caring and hardworking monk. He rebuilt the cathedral at Worcester, cared for the poor, and struggled to ease the harsh conditions imposed by the Normans on the Saxons.

Unlike some priests, he baptised children of the poor without charge. It is said that he never turned away people asking for help.

Wulfstan fought the slave trade in Bristol (slave trading didn't just start with slaves from Africa but had been going on for centuries with slaves from England being sold to Ireland and North Africa).

Wulfstan died whilst washing the feet of 12 poor men during a service in the cathedral. He died as he had lived, serving God and caring for others.





Music Across The Ages

A

Concert

Given by

Bromsgrove Community Choir

Primrose Choir

And

Bromsgrove Recorder Consort



Saturday 3rd December

7:30pm

Bromsgrove Methodist Church

Free Entry

**Donations invited in aid of
Church funds and Primrose Hospice**



Love at Christmas (based on 1 Corinthians 13)

If I decorate my house perfectly with plaid bows, strands of twinkling lights and shiny balls, but do not show love, I'm just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas cookies, preparing gourmet meals and arranging a beautifully-adorned table at mealtime, but do not show love, I'm just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, sing carols in the nursing home and give all that I have to charity, but do not show love, it profits me nothing.

If I trim the spruce with shimmering angels and crocheted snowflakes, attend a myriad of holiday parties and sing in the choir's cantata but do not focus on Christ, I have missed the point.

LOVE



stops the cooking to hug your child.

sets aside the decorating to kiss your family.

is kind, though harried and tired.

doesn't envy another's home that has coordinated Christmas china and table linens.

doesn't yell at the children to get out of the way, but is thankful they are there to be in the way.

doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return but rejoices in giving to those who can't.

bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

never fails.

Video games will break, pearl necklaces will be lost, and golf clubs will rust, but giving the gift of love will endure.

WAS JESUS REALLY BORN ON 25 DECEMBER?

Almost certainly not. But the story of how that date came to be chosen as His 'birthday' is one that stretches back long before His birth with the following being but one version.

It seems to have started on the Greek island of Rhodes in 283 BC. That year the solstice fell on 25th December, and it was also the year that the Ancient World's largest Sun God stature – the 34 metre, 200 tonne Colossus of Rhodes, was consecrated.

By 46 BC, Julius Caesar had made 25th December the official winter solstice in the Julian calendar.



In AD 274, the Roman Emperor Aurelian chose the winter solstice to be the birthday of the Sun God. He also decreed that Sol Invictus (the unconquered sun) was 'Lord of the Roman Empire'.

Fifty years after that, Constantine had become the first pro-Christian Roman Emperor. He wanted the Church to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ on 25th December. Perhaps it was that, to him, Jesus was more or less the same person as the mighty Sun God or perhaps he felt that the ancient sun god's association with goodness, light, warmth and life would help ease the people's transition from paganism to Christianity. Whatever the reason, the Church went along with it, and chose 25th December to be the date of Christmas.

In an ancient mosaic in the crypt of St Peter's Cathedral, Jesus is portrayed as adorned with sun rays and riding in a chariot – just like Sol Invictus.

(And the huge, bronze 200 tonne statue of Sol Invictus? He fell over during an earthquake and was sold off as scrap!)





News from Girls' Brigade

We were delighted to start back at Girls' Brigade in September and were equally delighted to have Bella and Irene join us as helpers. A couple of new girls have joined our happy band as well, so all is well in GB land.

We have spent this term thinking about service and what it means to be of service to others. We have been very lucky and have had two super visitors to our meetings. First of all, we welcomed Louella who came to talk to us about her job as a nurse at Birmingham Children's Hospital. The girls loved asking Louella all about her job and we had great fun bandaging our soft toys and then each other!!



A couple of weeks later we had a visit from Jo who is a firefighter!

Jo brought her spare uniform for us all to try on and she told us all about what being a firefighter entails and how the Fire Service serves the community in many different ways.



Bonfire night gave us a reason to think about how we could be a shining light for Jesus and how we could serve each other. We hope you like our bonfire picture on our notice board.

We made lots of edible sparklers and went home very messy and full of sugar - again, sorry!

This last week, we continued our topic by thinking about Remembrance Day and how people made sacrifices by serving others. We thought about how this was replicated during the pandemic and how people made sacrifices during that time to serve and help other people. As we write, this weekend we will be marching at the Remembrance Sunday parade through Bromsgrove along with all the other organisations.



Next on the agenda, we take a deep breath as we start the run-up to Christmas!

Allie, Beckie, Claire, Lucy, Abbie (Leaders)

A MESSAGE FROM MARGARET

The time has come for me to say Thank you. First to say Thank you for the beautiful flowers Ilona brought me on Sunday recently. They were much appreciated.

Secondly, looking back I have been blessed with Good Health for years; till suddenly a diagnosis changed everything. We came to Bromsgrove in 1964 for two years and stayed for fifty. We left family and friends, and a lively church and found another loving church family. Sharing good times and bad; watching families expand and come and go.

Then we are asked “What does the church family mean to you?” I realise it gets more precious as the years go by. Supporting and being supported; doing one’s best to give back to the church family the gift of fellowship. The weekly worship together; the meeting of friends and most of all the faith and trust of a loving God.



Being housebound means I appreciate visitors more and look forward to the newsletters and connections each week, plus contributions from radio and TV. (I don’t do email)

My faith has been the mainstay for 90 years and I look forward with Thanksgiving!

Margaret Cornwall

P.S. My 90th birthday is on Christmas Eve. After the success of Pat’s 90th I intend to do the same (DV) but into the New Year, to raise funds for the church roof!

**Congratulations and Best Wishes
on your birthday from us all, Margaret!**



CANDLELIGHT CAROL SERVICE SUNDAY 18th DECEMBER, 6.00 pm

Come and enjoy some favourite well-known carols by candlelight.



HOT DRINKS AND MINCE PIES AT THE CENTRE



The Stewards invite you to join us for hot drinks and mince pies at the Centre on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, 19th, 20th and 21st December.

They will be served from 10.30am until 1.00pm, during which time there will be seasonal music and songs. The music will be live from about 11.45 till 1.00pm on Tuesday and Wednesday with Ruth Henley and some of her Community Choir members, and Bill Sumner on the piano keyboard.

Come along and enjoy the festive atmosphere!



CHRISTMAS EVE CAROL SERVICE 11.30pm

Led this year by Deacon Janet Thomas



CHRISTMAS POST REMINDERS



- The last collection is on **Sunday December 11th**, to give time for cards to be sorted and collected.
- Please post only cards that people will be able to pick up themselves
- Please give generously to Action for Children. Thank you!

Janet and Brian Henderson (Post Organisers)

The Man who married Mary



The traditional Nativity scene on our Christmas cards has Mary with the Holy Babe. Around her are the shepherds and Magi. We may also see stable animals, angels and a star!

While Joseph is often included, his presence seems to be of minor importance. After all, we praise God for Jesus with our familiar Christmas carols, mentioning angels, shepherds, Wise Men and Mary but the name of Joseph is absent!

Why is Joseph given a low profile? For he is a man to be remembered. Joseph was a resident of Nazareth. He worked as a carpenter and his skills would have included making furniture, repairing buildings and crafting agricultural tools. Although Joseph had an honourable profession, he would not have been a man of great wealth.

The gospel writers Matthew and Luke give Joseph a few brief mentions. After the birth of Jesus, Joseph and Mary go to the temple in Jerusalem to dedicate the Baby to God. Afterwards, they flee into Egypt to escape the wrath of Herod.

Much later they return to Nazareth & Mary and Joseph go with Jesus to Jerusalem for the Passover feast. Here they lose Jesus, only to find Him in the Temple talking with religious leaders!

Apart from these verses, the New Testament is silent about the rest of Joseph's life. However, we do know that Joseph was father to other children by Mary. His four sons are named, and they had at least two daughters. (*See Matthew 13:55*). And we also know that Joseph was someone who quietly and humbly took on the awesome role in caring for the early life of the Son of God.

Joseph would have taught Jesus many things – not just the skills of a labourer, but the lore of the countryside which was evident in our Lord's teaching. Jesus grew up within a loving family and described God as 'Father', knowing also the good fatherly qualities of Joseph.

In the Christmas story, Joseph is placed into a situation that brought him misunderstanding and suspicion. But Joseph remained faithful in the knowledge that as long as God had spoken, the opinion of others mattered little.

Before Jesus began His ministry, it is believed that Joseph died. It is likely Jesus took on many of His father's responsibilities before he left home.

In the eyes of the world, Joseph was a nobody. He was not a man of valour, fame and fortune. But he was the one who had parental responsibility for the greatest person who has ever lived!



It is sad that we often equate ordinariness with ineffectiveness. Down the ages, God has used many ordinary people to accomplish great things. God continues to use ordinary people.

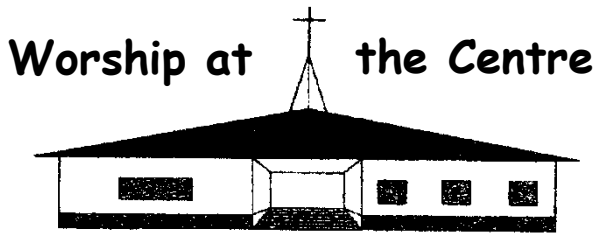
Like Joseph, we need to know that doing God's will is the most important thing in life. May we, this Christmas, respond to God's call to us and please Him in all that we do.

An Accidental Classic

Did you know that "Joy to the World" was not written as a Christmas carol? In its original form, it had nothing to do with Christmas. It wasn't even written to be a song.

Isaac Watts was one of the great hymn writers in church history, and I guess nothing shows that better than the fact that he wrote one of his most famous hymns by accident. In 1719, Watts published a book of poems in which each poem was based on a psalm. But rather than just translate the original Old Testament texts, he adjusted them to refer more explicitly to the work of Jesus as it had been revealed in the New Testament.

One of those poems was an adaptation of Psalm 98. Watts interpreted this psalm as a celebration of Jesus's role as King of both his church and the whole world. More than a century later, the second half of this poem was slightly adapted and set to music to give us what has become one of the most famous of all Christmas carols.



December 2022

4th Church Anniversary

9.00 am

Holy Communion

Revd Steve Levett

10.30 am

Morning Worship

Mrs Sue Pinfield

11th 10.30 am

Holy Communion

Revd Alan Bidnell

6.00 pm



Boys' and Girls' Brigades Carol Service



18th 10.30 am

Morning Worship

Revd Steve Levett



6.00 pm

Candlelight Carol Service Revd Steve Levett

24th 11.30 pm

Christmas Eve Worship

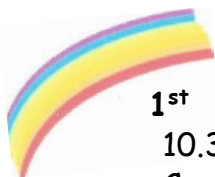
Deacon Janet Thomas

25th 10.00 am

Christmas Day Worship

Revd Steve Levett





January 2023

1st

10.30 am

Covenant and Communion Revd Steve Levett

8th

9.00 am

Holy Communion

Revd Alan Bidnell

10.30 am

Morning Worship

Deacon Janet Thomas

15th

10.30 am

Morning Worship

Mrs Sarah Leeson

6.00 pm

Holy Communion

Revd Steve Levett

22nd

10.30 am

Morning Worship

Revd Steve Levett



6.00 pm

Boys' Brigade Service

Revd Steve Levett

29th

10.30 am

Morning Worship

Mrs Maureen Foxall

Nativity Sets from around the World: 1



GUATEMALA



SAMOA

Epiphany Celebrations around Europe

In Spain, Epiphany is an important festival, where it's also known as 'The festival of the three Magic Kings' - 'Fiesta de Los tres Reyes Magos', and is when Spanish and some other Catholic children receive their presents - as they are delivered by the Three Kings!

On Epiphany morning you might go to the local bakers and buy a special cake/pastry called a 'Roscón' (meaning a ring-shaped roll). They are normally filled with cream chocolate and are decorated with a paper crown. There is normally a figure of a king hidden in the cake (if you find that you can wear the crown) and a dried bean (if you find that you're meant to pay for the cake!). In Catalonia it's known as a Tortell or Gâteau des Rois and is stuffed with marzipan.



In France you might eat a 'Galette des Rois', a type of flat almond cake. It has a toy crown cooked inside it and is decorated on top with a gold paper crown.

In Portugal, people take part in Epiphany carol singing known as the 'Janeiras' (January songs). On the Island of Madeira they're known as the 'Cantar os Reis' (singing the kings).

In Austria, at Epiphany, some people write a special sign in chalk over their front door. It's a reminder of the Wise Men that visited the baby Jesus. It's made from the year split in two with initials of the names that are sometimes given to 'the three wise men', Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar, in the middle of the door. So 2022 would be: 20*C*M*B*22. The sign is meant to protect the house for the coming year.



Some parts of Germany also have the tradition of marking over doors. The 'Four Hills' Ski Jumping Tournament also finishes on 6th January in Bischofshofen, Austria.

At Epiphany in Belgium, children dress up as the three wise men and go from door to door to sing songs and people give them money or sweets, kind of like Trick or Treating on Halloween.

Children in Poland also go out singing on Epiphany.



In Ireland, Epiphany is also sometimes called 'Nollaig na mBean' or Women's Christmas. Traditionally the women get the day off and men do the housework and cooking! It is becoming more popular and many Irish women now get together on the Sunday nearest Epiphany and have tea and cakes!

Epiphany Eve (also known as Twelfth Night) marks the end of the traditional Christmas celebrations and is the time when you were meant to take Christmas decorations down - although some people leave them up until Candlemas.

Wednesday Meeting Point

Programme for December and January



Wednesday December 7th

Wednesday December 21st

Wednesday January 4th

Wednesday January 18th

What do you collect?

**Christmas Nibbles/
Hat Game**

Bag Beetle

Lunch Out TBA

We meet at 7.30 pm in Room 6. All are welcome.

Your Gift of Life at Christmas

Creaking on the staircase -
Noise outside my door -
A rustle in the chimney -
It's 'Santa-time' once more.
St. Nicholas is on his way
With all his Christ-life gifts
To fire every child-light with
The loving Christ-mass kiss.



In some he'll place the gift of gold -
In others frankincense -
While others will be given myrrh
All signs of God's presence.
For in each earthly crib or bed
In squalor, comfort, splendour -
The Christ child has been placed again
To call the world to wonder.



So come you kings, come one, come all,
Come shepherds to the cradle stall
And hear the angels sing a-new
The heavenly song they sing for you.

Your God is in your gift of life -
The life He gives with love -
So take the gift and use it,
Use it wisely, don't abuse it,
Let the Christ-life fire your spirit
That God in you may LIVE.



One Man's Memories of his Homeland

I have a cousin called Joe Lawton who emigrated about forty years ago. He lived in Tasmania and had feelings of great nostalgia for this country. Over the years he penned many of his thoughts in poetic form and the following one came with a Christmas card. I thought it would be worth passing on.

With fingers blue and sparkling eyes
I watched the snow fall from the skies.
The North wind tossed each dancing flake
To form a mantle on the lake

The earth grew still beneath the snow
And loaded white capped trees bowed low.
Green pastures faded from my sight
To sleep beneath a coat of white.

Those happy days are now long past
I feel no more the icy blast,
Or feed the robins in the cold
I'm far from home and growing old.

I sometimes wish and often pray
To go back one Christmas Day,
When snow clouds fill the winter sky
And white cold flakes go racing by.

Unfortunately, Joe died before the Covid pandemic came and did not achieve his dearest wish. I must say that I do not share his love of snow!



Jean Wiseman



HYMNS WE LOVE



“Once in royal David’s city” by Cecil Frances Alexander StF No. 214

*Once in royal David’s city stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.*

*He came down to earth from heaven, who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall;
with the needy, poor and lowly lived on earth our Saviour holy.*

*And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love,
for that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heaven above;
and he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.*

*Not in that poor lowly stable with the oxen standing by,
shall we see him, but in heaven, set at God’s right hand on high.
There his children gather round, bright like stars, with glory crowned.*

BIOGRAPHY (courtesy of Wikipedia)

Cecil Frances Alexander was an Anglo-Irish poet and hymnwriter. She also wrote “All things bright and beautiful” and “There is a green hill far away”, as well as others, including this carol. She lived from 1818 to 1895.

By the 1840s she was already well known as a hymnwriter. She was a member of the Oxford Movement, a philosophical and religious society; and was a friend of John Keble. He edited one of her anthologies.

She married Anglican John Alexander, later Bishop of Derry and Archbishop of Armagh.

She died at the bishop’s palace in Derry. Her husband is buried beside her at Derry Cathedral. Her legacy includes some of the best-known hymns.

COMMENT: This carol tells the nativity story as we understand it from the gospels and reminds us of Jesus’ humble origins, when he took on human form. Interestingly the magi or “wise men” came from the East, looking for one born to be king. They found him in no palace, but in a “lowly cattle shed”.

The second stanza outlines the “mystery” of how God came “down to earth from heaven”, to dwell with the needy, poor and lowly. It is a tenet of our faith that God was in this baby, who became Son of God, Saviour, Sovereign of our lives, and eternal friend.

The third verse goes on to remind us that Jesus came not to be served, but to serve and to declare and enact “God’s redeeming love” at Calvary. He died, rose again and is now “our Lord in heaven above”. There he has gone to prepare a place for us (John 14).

The final lines repeat the promise that by faith “we shall see him”, know him and worship him - as the author puts it – “gathered round, bright like stars” and “with glory crowned.”

May the everlasting truths of the Christmas story bless us and uplift us at this happy time. As we eagerly open our presents, let us remember the greatest present of all – Jesus himself!

A happy Christmas to all.

John Webb



If you enjoy knitting, crochet and chatting, you would be very welcome to our group which meets in the Coffee Shop on Tuesday mornings between 10am and 11.30. Bring your own handiwork or knit for a charity.

Lizzie Dovey

Nativity Sets from around the World: 2



PHILIPPINES



ESTONIA

Heaven's Grocery Store



As I was walking down life's highway,
many years ago, I came across a sign that
read "HEAVEN'S GROCERY STORE".

When I got a little closer the doors swung open wide,
And when I came to myself, I was standing inside
And saw a host of Angels. They were standing everywhere.
One handed me a basket and said, "My child, shop with care".
Everything a human needed was in that Grocery Store,
And what you could not carry you could come back for more.

First, I got some PATIENCE

LOVE was in that same row

Further down was UNDERSTANDING

You need that everywhere you go.

I got a box or two of WISDOM and FAITH a bag or two

And CHARITY of course, I would need some of that too.

I couldn't miss the HOLY GHOST, it was all over the place

And then some STRENGTH and COURAGE, to help me run the race.

My basket now was getting full but I remembered I needed GRACE.

And then I chose SALVATION for salvation was for free

I tried to get enough of that to do for you and me.

Then I started to the counter to pay my grocery bill

For I thought I had everything to do the Master's will.

As I went up the aisle, I saw PRAYER and put that in

For I knew when I stepped outside, I would run into sin.

SONG and PRAISE were hanging up, so I just helped myself.

Then I said to the angel, "Now how much do I owe?"

"My child" he said "God paid your bill, a long, long time ago".

Nativity Sets from around the World: 3



POLAND



PORTUGAL

CHRISTMAS WORDSEARCH



Christmas
Cambridge
City
Apostles
Christ
Lord
Poor

Millions
Choirboy
King's
Creed
Little
Manger
Mean

Radio
Royal
College
Virgin
Child
Stall

Eve
Hymn
Chapel
Mary
Earth
Shelter

Treble
David
Alexander
Jesus
Heaven
Cradle

"The Adventure of English"

In Melvin Bragg's book, titled as above, he tells us how the English Language developed in spite of the incursions of the Germans, Scandinavians, French and other invaders. This has resulted in the plural form taking on many aspects, some Old English, some German, some French.

He quotes a "scroll of doggerel" which he says is in use even today and does show why English is so hard to learn as a second language, compared to German where, always, you seem to say what you see:



We'll begin with a box and the plural is boxes,
But the plural of ox should be oxen not oxes,
Then one fowl is goose, but two are called geese,
yet the plural of moose should never be meese.
You may find a lone mouse or a whole load of mice,
but the plural of house is houses not hice.

If the plural of man will always be men,
why shouldn't the plural of pan be called pen?
The cow in a plural may be cows or kine,
but the plural of vow is vows not vine.

I speak of a foot and you show me feet,
If I give you a boot, would a pair be a beet?
The masculine pronouns are he, his and him,
but imagine the feminine - she, shis and shim!

So our English, I think you all will agree
is the trickiest language you ever did see.

HUMOUR CORNER



Christmas Cracker Jokes



What song do you sing to a snowman at Christmas?

Freeze a jolly good fellow.

Who hides in the bakery before Christmas?

A mince spy.

What athlete is warmest in winter?

A long jumper.

What happened to the man who stole an Advent Calendar?

He got 25 days.

What does Santa suffer from when he gets stuck in a chimney?

Claustrophobia

A youngster went to visit Father Christmas at the local garden centre grotto. He smiled and asked what the child would like for Christmas. "Didn't you get my email", the child gasped!



Christmas comes early to Wednesday Meeting Point



And Finally

I hope that you have enjoyed this edition of FORUM and that it will help to look forward to once again celebrating with joy the birth of our Saviour in the stable in Bethlehem and as we go into 2023, the 40th Anniversary of the Church and Centre.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this edition

The deadline date for the submission of articles for the February/March Forum will be **Sunday January 15th**. Please email your contributions to me at les.jim42@btinternet.com or, if hard copy, place in the FORUM folder in the Church office.

During the course of the next year it would be ideal if, in each edition, we could share memories of the past forty years at Bromsgrove Methodist in words and pictures. As someone who has been here for 12 years only, I would be fascinated to read and see these memoriesdon't be shy!

Lesley and I wish everyone a very Blessed Christmas and, when it comes, a Happy & Healthy New Year.

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CHURCH ACTIVITIES AT THE CENTRE

MONDAY

6.00 pm Girls' Brigade

TUESDAY

10.00 am Toddler Group

10.00 am Knitting Group

WEDNESDAY

6.00 pm Boys' Brigade Anchor Boys

7.15 pm Boys' Brigade Juniors

7.30 pm Meeting Point (1st & 3rd)

SATURDAY

10.30 am CAMEO (1st & 3rd)

During the week other groups and organisations run activities at the Centre too. See the noticeboards for information.

COFFEE SHOP

10.30 am to 12.30 pm

Monday to Thursday

Closed on Friday & Saturday





**Happy
New Year
2023**