



CHRIST CHURCH
CROUCH END HILL
LONDON N8 8AX
CROSSLINKS
JOY TO THE WORLD

A MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH ON THE HILL



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Vicar's three minute reflection
JOY TO THE WORLD



Each year as we approach the Christmas season and the threshold of a new year, I have found it rewarding to reflect on the uniqueness of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. As one who believes in the authority and inspiration of the Scripture there is the hope and conviction that the return of Christ is not only imminent, but that even those momentous events described in Matthew 24 cannot be far away. The world, for the most part, however, does not hold to such a belief. The world celebrates Christmas without Christ and this grows more blatant as the years go by. And not only that, but many today resent the singing of carols or any sort of religious emphasis during the season of the year. Some have even suggested changing the name of the season to some secular, nondescript name. In fact, do we not now live in a age in which only one prejudice is tolerated—anti-Christian bigotry?

People who don't know Christ often wonder why we make so much fuss about Him. If only they could have a taste of the joy of abundant living.

Jesus Christ is the subject of more than 300 Old Testament prophecies. His birth nearly 2,000 years ago, and events of His life had been foretold by many prophets during a period of 1,500 years. History confirms that even the smallest detail happened just as predicted. It confirms beyond a doubt that Jesus is the true Messiah, the Son of God and Saviour of the world. Jesus has to be seen in the light of God's bigger story that goes back many centuries.

People who don't know Christ often wonder why we make so much fuss about Him. If only they could have a taste of the joy of abundant living which is not conditioned by the uncertainties of the money market, the reality of the economic crunch or the instability of our political world. If only they could know of the joy of sins forgiven and the assurance of being in a positive, intimate relationship with the One by whose hands the whole world is held together!



Other religions hold Jesus Christ in high honour, but they do not regard Him as the centre of God's purposes and the Emmanuel-God with us. Hindus recognize Him as an 'avatar' (incarnation) of Vishnu. Muslims acknowledge Him as one of the great prophets whose virgin birth, sinless life, acts of kindness, miracles, and return one day to this earth are all affirmed in the Qur'an. Jews write of Him as a man of outstanding character. **But Jesus Christ is not one Saviour among others; He is the only Saviour.**

He is not one of Hinduism's 330 million gods or one of the 40 prophets recognized in the Qur'an. He is unique and the only Saviour of the world— God with us.' In an age when schools teach that all religions have equal value, we should never forget that Christianity is not one faith among many other faiths; it is in a category all by itself. Christianity is a relationship. Jesus is not a Saviour, He is the only Saviour' (Selwyn Hughes). On Him all the Old Testament truths converge and from Him all the New Testament truths emerge.

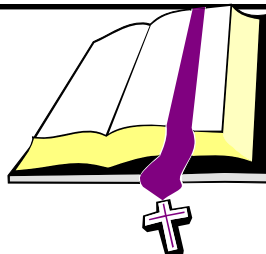
Christianity is a story mainly about Jesus— who He is, where He came from, what He has done, and what He is still doing. Let us keep Christ in all our Christmas celebrations. The number one way to keep Jesus Christ in your Christmas celebrations is to have him present in your daily life. If you're not sure what it means to become a believer in Christ, check out the article on "How to Become a Christian" (page 8). If you've already accepted Jesus as your Saviour and made him the centre of your life, keeping Christ in Christmas is more about the way you live and your willingness to talk about what Jesus is doing in your life.

Dele Agbelusi

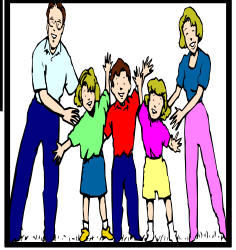
Memory Verse

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16



LOVE: THE GREATEST FORCE ON EARTH-LOVING THE SAME AS CHRIST



The problem with love is that so many people don't have a clue what it is. Love is NOT a feeling; it's an ATTITUDE. Basing love on emotions, as the world does, has caused immeasurable pain to countless numbers of people. It's like building a sand castle on the beach. It might look solid, but when the high tide rolls in, the sand castle isn't strong enough to hold up, and it washes away.

Feelings come and go.

We all experience a variety of emotions on any given day. Obviously, basing any human relationship strictly on feelings is asking for trouble. Parents who love their children only when the mood hits them are poor parents. A friend who remains loyal only until a better offer comes along isn't much of a friend. A husband who deserts his wife and children because he finds another woman more attractive has missed the point of marriage.

The world encourages you to love the lovable but gives you permission to hate your enemies.

The world gives love a staggering amount of attention. Movies, songs, and books about love generate billions of dollars in revenue. The problem is that love is presented as something to be "fallen into" and "fallen out of." There's no solution given for what to do when the emotion fails you and the warm fuzzies are gone—other than bailing out and starting over with someone else. You can recognize worldly love by how unpredictable it is.

The Bible offers a different kind of love.

This love says I'm committed to act lovingly toward this person **regardless** of how I feel. You'll be able to recognize biblical love: It's patient, unselfish, and loyal. It doesn't keep score; it assumes the best motives. It gives without seeking in return; it always seeks to honour God, and it endures through thick, and thin, and in-between. Feelings change. Feelings don't last, but Biblical Love is eternal.

Love: The Greatest Force on earth Loving the same as Christ

Loving the same

There's a difference between God's love and the love that the world knows. If we aren't careful, Christians can begin to adopt the world's way of loving instead of God's. The world says *love is a feeling*. When you stop *feeling* love for someone, it means you no longer love him or her. The world encourages you to love the lovable but gives you permission to hate your enemies. Jesus said loving those who love you is no great feat; it's loving your enemies that proves you are a loving person (Matthew 5:46).

Jesus commanded those who wanted to be his disciples to follow HIS standard for loving people rather than the world's standard. Jesus directs us to love others in exactly the same way he loves us. When Jesus saw us hopelessly enslaved to sin, he didn't say, "I don't feel like dying on a cross for them. I think I'll wait until the feeling comes." He didn't say, "I've tried and tried to love them but they always reject me. I give up!"

Jesus saw that without him we would perish, and He acted lovingly toward us despite our rejecting Him. His love didn't depend on what we did to deserve it, or even on whether we accepted it. Jesus freely and unconditionally gave us his love.

Jesus said loving those who love you is no great feat; it's loving your enemies that prove you are a loving person.



This is how God wants us to love our spouses. Not with strings attached, as the world loves. Not just love as long as they're lovable. Not just love as long as they appreciate it. God wants us to give our love freely and unconditionally. Only God can help us to love people in this way.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Down a long, nearly deserted California beach an old man is walking. Every few steps he bends down, picks up something, and throws it in the water. A young jogger has been running along, and as he was running he watched the old man. Finally his curiosity gets him and he runs over to the old man, and asks what he's doing.

The man said, "I'm saving the life of these starfish. The storm washed them up last night, and the sun will be up and hot in about 30 minutes. It'll kill them, so I'm throwing them back into the water to save their lives."

The jogger is astounded. He said, "Old man, you have 30 miles of beach and millions of washed up starfish before you. What possible difference can you make?"

The old man took another step, reached down, and picked up another starfish. With all his might he threw it into the ocean, and said "Well, son, I guess I made a difference in that one's life". Do not consider your contribution to the spread of the good news about Christ intangible. In your little corner, what you do and say to draw attention to the love of Christ for humanity matter.

SOMETIMES

Sometimes it helps a little
When skies are overcast
To remember that tomorrow
This day's troubles will be past.

And tomorrow always brings
New strength
New courage, too some way ...
For each dawn's a bright beginning
And each day's a brand-new day.

Sue Ogilvie-Arendse
(1927-2008)

NOTICE BOARD

For God so loved the world that He gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not die but have eternal life.

(John 3: 16)



Rejoice,
It's Christmas!!!
Join us at

**CHRIST CHURCH
CROUCH END HILL, LONDON N8**

Sunday 14th December

**10.30am: Christingle and Family Carol Service
Theme: Christ - The Light of the World**

Sunday 21st December

**10.30am: Christmas Carols and Nine Lessons
followed by Christmas Meal**

Wednesday 24th December - Christmas Eve

11.00pm: Carols/Midnight Holy Communion

Thursday 25th December - Christmas Day

10.30am: Parish Holy Communion

Sunday 28th December

10.30am: Morning Prayer

Wednesday 31st December

**11.00pm : New Year's Eve Praise, Worship and
Prayers**

8.00 am all Sundays: Holy Communion Service (B.C.P.)

THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER REQUESTS

This month we pray for members of our church family whose surnames begin with D, E, F.

Davies Genevieve; Dolan Angela; Dunnage Barry; Evans Beverley; Evetts Richard, Farthing Jenny; Faulkner Emma; Forsdike Jack; Freeburne Vera; Fujisaki Yumie; Furlong Rosalind.

Completion of Masters Programme

We join Elizabeth Jackson, one of our Sunday School teachers, in thanking God for her successful completion of a Master of Science degree in Medical Microbiology.

HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

Salvation Begins With God: Have you felt the "tug" of God on your heart? Becoming a Christian is one of the most important steps you will take in your life on earth. Continue reading to learn what the Bible teaches about becoming a Christian and what it means to be a follower of Christ.

This call to salvation begins with God. He initiates it by wooing or drawing us to come to Him. John 6:44 *"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him ..."* (NIV)

Human Efforts are Futile: God desires an intimate relationship with us, but we cannot obtain it through our own efforts. Isaiah 64:6 *"All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags..."* Romans 3:10-12 *"...There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."*

Separated by Sin: We have a problem. Our sin separates us from God, leaving us spiritually empty. Romans 3:23 *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."* It is impossible for us to find peace with God through our own efforts. Anything we try to do to obtain God's favour or gain salvation is worthless and futile.

A Gift from God: Salvation then, is a gift from God. He offers the gift through Jesus, his Son. By laying down his life on the cross, Christ took our place and paid the ultimate price, the penalty for our sin -- death. Jesus is our only way to God. John 14:6 *Jesus said "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me."* (NLT) Romans 5:8 *"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*

Responding to God's Call: The only thing we must do is respond to God's call.

But how? How do I become a Christian?

Receiving God's gift of salvation is not complicated.

How to become a Christian

The response to God's call is explained in these simple steps found in God's Word:

1) **Admit** you are a sinner and turn away from your sin. Acts 3:19 says: *"Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord."* Repent literally means "a change of attitude that results in a change of direction— a yielding of our wills to God in order to have His way" The resulting "change in action" is, of course, the turning away from sin.

2) **Believe** Jesus Christ died on the cross to save you from your sins and give you eternal life. John 3:16 says: *"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that **everyone** who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life."* (NLT) Believing in Jesus is also a part of repenting. God the Father planned it. In full co-operation, God the Son effected it, and God the Holy Spirit makes the death of Christ personal to us as we respond to His promptings.

3) **Come** to him by faith. It is not enough just to know the fact that the Lord Jesus died to save us from our sins. We must yield the control of our life to Him. Doing your best, trusting in luck or any other being will not bring you to God. Christ's claim is an exclusive one. Jesus said: *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me."* (NLT) How then can we come to Him?

4) **Pray.**

You may want to make your response to God a prayer. Prayer is simply communicating with God. Pray using your own words. There is no special formula. Just pray from your heart to God, and believe *that he has* saved you. If you feel lost and just don't know what to pray, here's a suggestion.

Dear Lord,

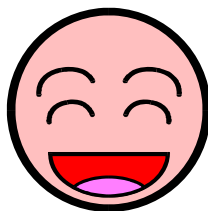
I admit that I am a sinner. I have done many things that don't please you. I have lived my life for myself.

(Continued on page 13)

LAUGHTER LINES

NOW GO TO SLEEP

How do you perceive God? Years ago a little girl rode a train with her family. At night they slept in the sleeping car with the little girl on the top bunk by herself. Mom assured her they would be right below her, and God would look after her. As the darkness became quiet the little girl got scared.



She called out, "Mommy, are you there?" Her mother replied, "Yes, dear." A few minutes passed and she asked her father the same question. Dad let it be known he was right below her. Several minutes later the questions were repeated and she also asked about her brother and sister. After everybody answered, "Yes," she was quiet-for a while. Later she began asking the same questions again, and another passenger lost his patience. In a deep voice he said, "We're all here! Your father, your mother, your brother, and your sister. Now GO TO SLEEP!" Complete silence followed his pronouncement. Then the little girl whispered, "Mommy, was that God?"

WHAT IF?



While reading her Bible on a public bus, a bashful Christian was confronted by a belligerent man. He boldly asked if she believed everything in the Bible. She affirmed she did. He then said, "If you believe everything, then explain to me how Jonah lived for three days in the belly of a whale!" The unassuming woman answered, "I don't know, but I believe he did." The man became more agitated. "Lady, you should be able to explain what you believe!" She quietly repeated her inability to know exactly how Jonah survived but noted she would ask him once she got to heaven. Sarcastically, the rude guy queried, "And what if Jonah didn't make it to heaven?" She replied, "Then you ask him." * Ike Reighard, SBC Pastor's Conference

LAUGHTER LINES

LIVING WITH THE CONSEQUENCES

A little five-year-old was watching his older brother get disciplined by their father. After a thorough lecture the dad reminded his elder son that he would now have to live with the consequences of his actions. A few minutes later little Larry spoke with his dad and made a special request, "Dad, if David has to go and live with the consequences, can I have his room?"

* Reader's Digest, Sept. 1992



CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM THE VICAR AND EDITORIAL TEAM OF CROSSLINKS

May God grant you the light in Christmas, which is faith; the warmth of Christmas, which is love; the radiance of Christmas, which is purity; the righteousness of Christmas, which is justice; the belief in Christmas, which is truth; the all of Christmas, which is Christ.



Story of the Month

A STRANGER AT THE DOOR

It was a snowy Christmas Eve. Inside the warm house, the Christmas tree was cheerfully ablaze with lights and surrounded by dozens of presents. The man's wife and children were dressed and ready to leave for church. "Come with us," they urged, for they loved him.



"Not me," he snapped. "I don't believe all that religion garbage."

For many years the man's wife had been trying to tell him about Jesus Christ and the salvation he offers. How God's Son had become a human being in order to show us the way to heaven. "Nonsense," the man always said.

The family left for church and the man was all alone in his cozy country home. He glanced out the window at the cold snowy scene outside. He turned to warm himself by the fire. But as he turned, his eyes caught a movement in the snow outside. He looked. Cats! Three young cats walking slowly past his window. "The fools," he thought. "They'll freeze for sure!" The man put on his hat and coat and opened the door. A blast of wintry air sent a shiver through his body.

"Come here, cats! Come inside where there's warmth and food. You'll die out there." But the cats ran away, frightened by the stranger at the door. He walked outside. "Come back! Don't be afraid, I want to save you." But the cats were gone. It was too late.

"Well, I did everything I could for them," the man muttered to himself. "What more could I do? I'd have to become a cat myself in order to reach them and save them. If I became a cat, I could tell them and show them. They would have to believe me then, unless they were fools." (continued on page 13)

How to become a Christian (from page 9)

Having counted the cost, I now come to You, and open the door of my heart, and welcome you into my life. According to Your promise, as my Saviour and Lord. I believe that you died on the cross for me, to save me. You did what I could not do for myself. Please take control of my life, I give it to you. Help me to live every day in a way that pleases you. I love you, Lord, and I thank you that I will spend all eternity with you. Amen

5) Now, **don't doubt**. Salvation is received by grace, through faith. There's nothing you did, or ever can do, to deserve it. It's a free gift from God. All you have to do is receive it! Ephesians 2:8 says: *"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God."*

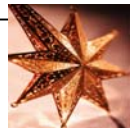
6) **Tell someone** about your decision. Romans 10:9-10 says, *"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."* I will love to hear from you and send to you some printed materials that would help you in your Christian walk at no cost to you. Please write to: The Vicar, Christ Church Crouch End Hill, 32 Crescent Road, London N8 8AX.

A stranger at the door (continued from page12)

Just as he reached the door, the church bells rang in the distance. The man paused for a second and listened. Then he went in by the fire, got down on his knees, and wept.

And that is what the Christmas story is all about. The Creator of the universe loved us so much that he came to earth to show us how to be saved. And if we listen to him and follow him, we will not perish, but instead will be given everlasting life. (John 3:16; Philipians 2:6-8)

Youth Specialties



WHY IS "SILENT NIGHT " SO POPULAR?

Why has "Silent Night" become our most beloved carol? Is it the words -- tender, intimate, gentle? Or the tune -- so peaceful, so memorable, so easy to play or pick out with one hand on the piano?

It is not a joyous, fast-paced carol like Handel's "Joy to the World." Nor theologically-rich like Charles Wesley's "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing." Nor does it have a complex tune like "Angels We Have Heard on High." Rather, "Silent Night" is quiet and reflective, calling us to meditate on the scene. It is the ambience conveyed by both the gentle words and melody that create from this carol an oasis of peace.

"All is calm, all is bright."

It calls us to dwell on Mary and the Child

"Round yon Virgin, mother and Child, Holy Infant, so tender and mild, Sleep in heavenly peace."

You *feel* as the "shepherds quake at the sight." You can imagine as "heavenly hosts sing Alleluia." And you begin to sing "Alleluia to the King" right along with them.

Rays of backlit brilliance highlight many a religious painting, but here the picture of light is painted in words:

"Glories stream from heaven afar...."

"Son of God, love's pure light"

"Radiant beams from Thy holy face...."

Just Who is in this manger? What is the significance of this birth? What is Christmas about -- really? Perhaps most of all, "Silent Night" is beloved because it reminds us in its simple, but exceedingly clear way, the truth behind it all -- the truth that changes everything:

"Christ, the Saviour is born!"

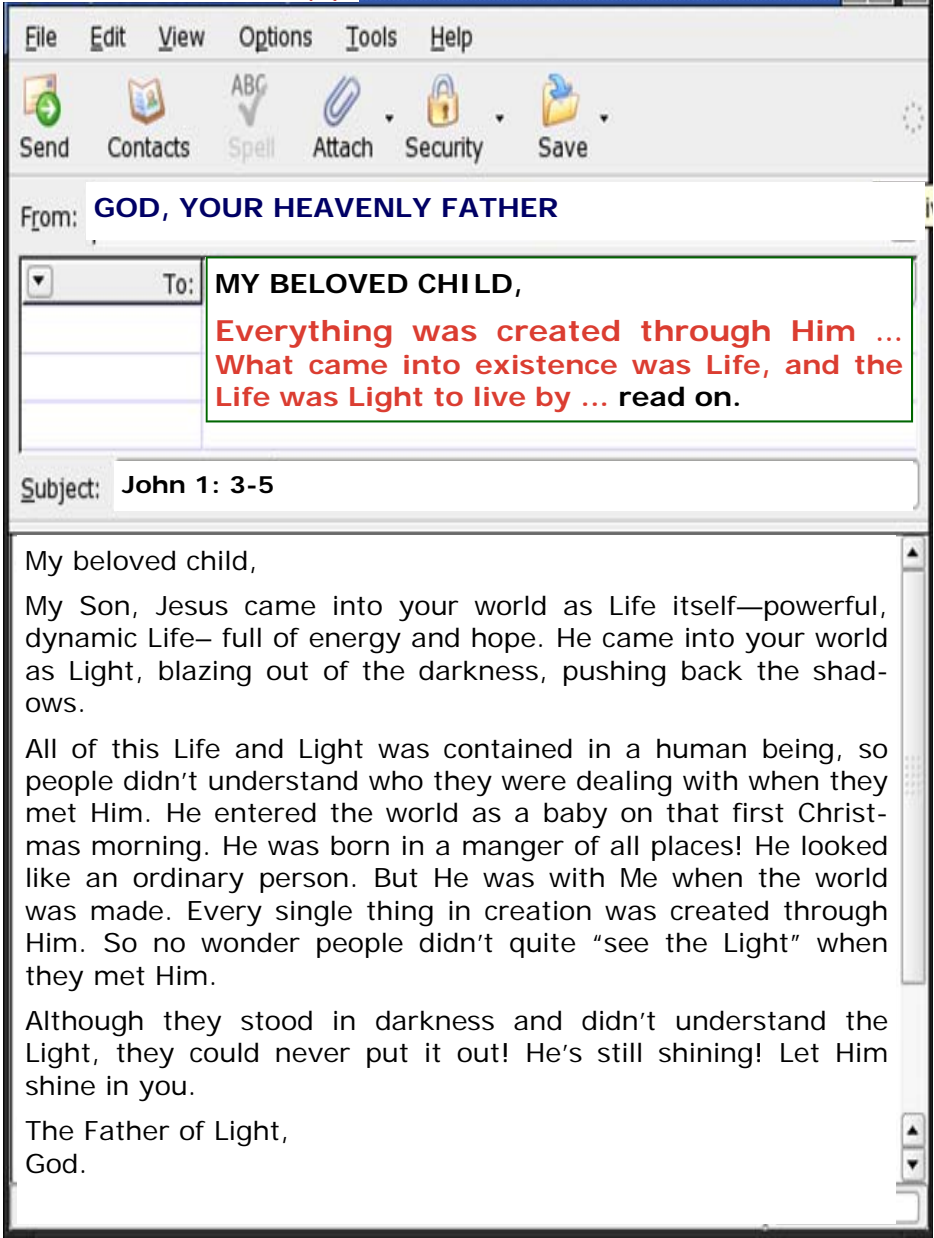
Sing it again this Christmas and let its gentle peace wash over you and its bold assertion renew your soul.

"Jesus, Lord, at thy birth

"Jesus, Lord, at thy birth!"

HEAVENLY CORRESPONDENCE

E-MAIL FROM GOD (4)



The screenshot shows an email client interface. The title bar reads 'E-MAIL FROM GOD (4)'. The menu bar includes 'File', 'Edit', 'View', 'Options', 'Tools', and 'Help'. The toolbar contains icons for 'Send', 'Contacts', 'Spell', 'Attach', 'Security', and 'Save'. The 'From:' field is 'GOD, YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER'. The 'To:' field is 'MY BELOVED CHILD,'. The 'Subject:' field is 'John 1: 3-5'. The email body contains the following text:

My beloved child,

My Son, Jesus came into your world as Life itself—powerful, dynamic Life— full of energy and hope. He came into your world as Light, blazing out of the darkness, pushing back the shadows.

All of this Life and Light was contained in a human being, so people didn't understand who they were dealing with when they met Him. He entered the world as a baby on that first Christmas morning. He was born in a manger of all places! He looked like an ordinary person. But He was with Me when the world was made. Every single thing in creation was created through Him. So no wonder people didn't quite "see the Light" when they met Him.

Although they stood in darkness and didn't understand the Light, they could never put it out! He's still shining! Let Him shine in you.

The Father of Light,
God.

Adapted from 'e-mail from God for Teens'-Clonigers

Motto /Text for the year

**“I CAN DO EVERYTHING THROUGH HIM WHO GIVES
ME STRENGTH” PHILIPPIANS 4:13**

FINDING OUT ABOUT ...CHRIST CHURCH?

Tel/Fax: 020 8340 1566

We are a family of men and women, boys and girls who are trying to live for God in a world that has largely chosen to ignore Him.

We believe that it is God's world and that He has given the answer to all human problems in Jesus Christ.

As a body of believers, we offer to all who come regular opportunities for worship and service that point the way to God as our strongest resources in all aspects of life.

We will be pleased to welcome you to any of our activities. You will find a warm welcome at Christ Church.

Times of worship and fellowship are shown below:

- Sunday**
- **8.00am.** Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
 - **10.30am.** Main service with Crèche facilities
- There is family/parade service once every month– usually the third Sunday of the month unless otherwise indicated.
- **5.00pm.** Evening worship

ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK

- Sunday - Choir practice in church (**9.30 am**)
- Monday - Baby n' Toddler Group (**10.00 am to 12 noon**)
- Brownies meeting in church (**5.30 pm**)
 - Next Prayer meetings in church - 15th December, 5th, 19th January (**8 pm**)
- Wednesday - Bible Fellowship in church - West Chapel (**7:45 pm for 8.00pm start**)
- Friday - Bible Fellowship in church - West Chapel (**2.00 pm**)
- Scouts meeting in church and hall (**6.00 pm**)
 - Music Team practice in choir vestry (**6.30 pm**)
- Enquiry/Counselling/Prayer Lifeline - please phone 020 8340 1566

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Vicar: Revd Canon Dele Agbelusi

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Assistant Organist: Pavla Bockova

YOUR COMMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME

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