

holy trinity church parish magazine

December 2015



30p



INSIDE THIS MONTH

Christmas Prayer:
Daphne Kitching

From the Vicarage:
Vicar Neil

Meaning of Christmas :
Inspirational story reveals the true
meaning of Christmas

Through Jesus Hope Lives:
A Christmas Story

Farewell to Dad's Army:
70 years on

All Dressed Up:
Lois Plimmer

**Wishing everyone a Joyful, Blessed
and Peaceful Christmas**

Christmas Answer

(Lk 2:6)

So many refugees,
So many homeless people,
So much conflict and despair and pain,
In a world without answers.

But God so loved this world
That he created Christmas
And came, in Jesus.
Jesus, born into poverty,
Jesus, who was homeless,
Who was a refugee,
Who shares our conflict and despair and pain,
Who takes it all and transforms it
By his life-giving death and resurrection
Into possibilities of peace and hope and joy,
Into life in all its fullness.
Jesus who came out of the stable
And lives.
God's answer.
Hallelujah.

By Daphne Kitching

Christmas Prayer 2015

Loving, giving Father,
Thank you for Jesus, Emmanuel. Thank you that he came at
Christmas and is alive and just as relevant today as he was all
those years ago, and will be forever.
As many of us celebrate your coming to us, with our families, in
warm, safe homes, in a democratic country, we pray for everyone
who has left their homeland because of persecution, for everyone
who is without shelter, or food, or family. Give us compassionate
hearts, like yours, Lord. Help us, as Christ's body here on earth, to
love and serve and make room for each other this Christmas.
In Jesus' name. Amen

By Daphne Kitching

Inside This Month

- 4/5 Letter from the Vicarage
- 6/7 Prayer Focus - The Homeless
- 8/9 Meaning of Christmas - wanttoknow.info/christmas-stories
- 10 Through Jesus Hope Lives - www.share-christmas.com
- 11 The Way I See It - The pivotal importance of the Middle East
- parish pump
- 12/13 St James the Least of All – final letter in the series
- parish pump
- 14/16 When Winston Churchill was president of a Black Country
literary institute - blackcountrybugle
- 17 Farewell to Dad's Army - 70 years on - parish pump
- 18 The Wit of Churchill - The final anecdote by John Pegler
- 19 Memorable dates down the year - December - parish pump
- 20 ALL DRESSED UP - *Lois Plimmer*
- 21/23 People, Remembrance and News
- 24 Forthcoming Events

From the Vicarage

Advent has arrived. There is lots to look forward to. I wonder what you look forward to during advent?

I look forward to spending time with family and friends, giving and receiving gifts, brisk walks in cold, crisp air followed by steaming cups of hot chocolate by a log fire.



When I was growing up in Scotland we lived in the shadow of an extinct volcano called the Eildon Hills. My village is 232 metres (761 ft) above sea level and the summit of the Eildon Hill is 422m above sea level (1384 ft). It takes about 50 minutes to climb to the top. I love the sense of achievement and the spectacular views from the top. I also love looking back down the hill to see the way we walked up.



The Eildon Hills from Scott's View (the place where Walter Scott sat for inspiration for his novels)

Advent is like climbing to the summit of a hill. On Christmas day we stand at the summit and look back and admire the view of the way we have come.

We look right back into history and see the unfolding and unrelenting work of God, saving a world thrown into chaos by the work of evil and the waywardness of all people. And so I look forward to our celebrations this Christmas. I look forward to singing with all God's people about the amazing day when the Saviour of world was born.

Climbing the Eildons presents another way of looking at advent and Christmas. You see there are three false summits (or false horizons) which trick first time climbers into thinking that they are near the top when there is still lots of climbing to do.

Advent and Christmas each year are like a false summit. We climb up to Christmas but if we think that we've made the top then we miss something much more important to come. The question of Christmas is for us all is, how far does our horizon stretch?

There is a final summit, a place we will all one day reach.

What is this final summit? It is the day when Christ returns to fairly judge all people according to his law. On that day he will give each person what we rightly deserve. On that day there will be two groups of people.

One group will be given a gift they don't deserve. The greatest gift of all Christmas gifts. For those who had received the gift of Jesus, his birth, life, teaching, death on the cross, resurrection from the dead and reign as king by his law, there will be the gift of eternal life with him (John 3:16).

But for the second group of people, who continued throughout their life with a bad attitude towards God, and an attitude of rebellion against his good and pleasing will, all those who rejected the gift of Jesus and his love, then there will be the shocking and sickening realisation. For this group there is a lake of burning sulphur awaiting, hotter than the lava which once flowed from the Eildon Hills (John 3:36).

As we look forward at Christmas, the final summit is one which fills everyone who knows and loves Jesus with joy and expectation which is far greater than the short term joy of Christmas parties, presents and people.

There is one last Eildon Hill story which I want to tell you. One autumn my Scout troop, about 25 teenage boys, went out on the Eildon Hills for a man hunt. We scattered across the hill hunting down a leader. As we played the game, a thick fog came down and it began to snow. We were caught in a white out. We could not see more than 15 or 20 yards ahead. We were lost and needed rescuing. We needed someone to save us. This is what Jesus came to do. He is our rescuer from the works of evil. If you have not yet been saved by the Saviour of the world, the Lord Jesus, then I pray that this Christmas your Saviour will find you and that the fog will lift for you.

The fact that I am here today tells the end of the Eildon story. I was rescued. May the same be true for us all when we stand on the final summit before our holy and just God.

Come Lord Jesus, come.

With much love

Neil

Prayer Focus - Homelessness

Homelessness is still a growing problem throughout the world but at this time of year it seems even more of a problem, with the onset of winter.



Please remember in your prayers the organizations that are providing help to the many people who will sleep rough on the streets of Britain this Christmas. **The Big Issue** is now an international movement, providing opportunities for people facing homelessness to help themselves.

At the centre of this work is **The Big Issue Magazine**, a news & current affairs magazine written by professional journalists and sold on the streets by vendors looking to overcome the crises surrounding homelessness. In order to sell the Big Issue, they must be homeless or at risk of homelessness.



Vendors undergo a training session and sign the vendor code of conduct. This is made up of rules they must adhere to whilst selling the magazine to the public. These people are trying to help themselves towards a better life so please remember them when you are out and about, perhaps a friendly word from you could make their day a little brighter and if you buy a magazine that will be a way of contributing to helping them get back on their feet.

Please pray for another organization **CRISIS**. This is run by volunteers who offer their services free.

CRISIS offers **OPEN CHRISTMAS** to all who need somewhere to keep warm and have their meals provided for them, have a shower, a haircut or pick up some new clothes. They can ask advice about housing or benefits, and they can get medical treatments.



We may feel that we can't help very much, but if we pray to God that there burdens may be lighter along life's road and offer them kindness when we meet, we may find that we were meeting with Jesus.

Jesus says to us, *"I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me a drink, I was a stranger and you received me into your homes, naked and you clothed me, in prison and you visited me"*.

When did we ever do any of this Lord?

Jesus replied, *"I tell you whenever you did this for one of the least important of these brothers of mine, you did it for me".*

Matthew ch: 25 v35-40

God of compassion,

*your love for humanity was revealed in Jesus,
whose earthly life began in the poverty of a stable
and ended in the pain and isolation of the cross:
we hold before you those who are homeless and cold
especially in this bitter weather.*

*Draw near and comfort them in spirit
and bless those who work to provide them
with shelter, food and friendship.*

We ask this in Jesus' name.

*Hear our prayer today for all women and men, boys and girls who
are homeless this day.*

*For those sleeping under bridges, on park benches, in doorways or
bus stations.*

*For those who can only find shelter for the night but must wander
in the daytime.*

For families broken because they could not afford to pay the rent.

For those who have no relatives or friends who can take them in.

*For those who have no place to keep possessions that remind
them who they are.*

For those who are afraid and hopeless.

For those who have been betrayed by our social safety net.

*For all these people, we pray that you will provide shelter, security
and hope.*

*We pray for those of us with warm houses and comfortable beds
that we not be lulled into complacency and forgetfulness.*

*Jesus, help us to see your face in the eyes of every homeless
person we meet so that we may be empowered through word and
deed, and through the political means we have, to bring justice and
peace to those who are homeless. **Amen.***

Madeline

Meaning of Christmas

Inspirational Story Reveals True Meaning of Christmas

The short, inspirational Christmas story below reveals the true spirit and meaning of Christmas. It was originally published in the December 14, 1982 issue of *Woman's Day* magazine. This moving story inspired the creation of The White Envelope Project, a caring nonprofit organisation dedicated to developing the next generation of givers, civic leaders, and philanthropists. May this inspirational story remind us all of the true meaning of Christmas and giving during the holidays and throughout the year.



Christmas Story: For the Man Who Hated Christmas

By Nancy W. Gavin

It's just a small, white envelope stuck among the branches of our Christmas tree. No name, no identification, no inscription. It has peeked through the branches of our tree for the past ten years.

It all began because my husband Mike hated Christmas. Oh, not the true meaning of Christmas, but the commercial aspects of it – overspending and the frantic running around at the last minute to get a tie for Uncle Harry and the dusting powder for Grandma – the gifts given in desperation because you couldn't think of anything else.

Knowing he felt this way, I decided one year to bypass the usual shirts, sweaters, ties and so forth. I reached for something special just for Mike. The inspiration came in an unusual way.

Our son Kevin, who was 12 that year, was on the wrestling team at the school he attended. Shortly before Christmas, there was a non-league match against a team sponsored by an inner-city church. These youngsters, dressed in sneakers so ragged that shoestrings seemed to be the only thing holding them together, presented a sharp contrast to our boys in their spiffy blue and gold uniforms and sparkling new wrestling shoes.

As the match began, I was alarmed to see that the other team was wrestling without headgear, a kind of light helmet designed to protect a wrestler's ears. It was a luxury the ragtag team obviously could not afford.

Well, we ended up walloping them. We took every weight class. Mike, seated beside me, shook his head sadly, "I wish just one of them could have won," he said. "They have a lot of potential, but losing like this could take the heart right out of them." Mike loved kids – all kids. He so enjoyed coaching little league football, baseball and lacrosse. That's when the idea for his present came. That afternoon, I went to a local sporting goods store and bought an assortment of wrestling headgear and shoes, and sent them anonymously to the inner-city church. On Christmas Eve, I placed a small, white envelope on the tree, the note inside telling Mike what I had done, and that this was his gift from me.

Mike's smile was the brightest thing about Christmas that year. And that same bright smile lit up succeeding years. For each Christmas, I followed the tradition – one year sending a group of mentally handicapped youngsters to a hockey game, another year a cheque to a pair of elderly brothers whose home had burned to the ground the week before Christmas, and on and on.

The white envelope became the highlight of our Christmas. It was always the last thing opened on Christmas morning, and our children – ignoring their new toys – would stand with wide-eyed anticipation as their dad lifted the envelope from the tree to reveal its contents. As the children grew, the toys gave way to more practical presents, but the small, white envelope never lost its allure.

The story doesn't end there. You see, we lost Mike last year due to dreaded cancer. When Christmas rolled around, I was still so wrapped in grief that I barely got the tree up. But Christmas Eve found me placing an envelope on the tree. And the next morning, I found it was magically joined by three more. Unbeknownst to the others, each of our three children had for the first time placed a white envelope on the tree for their dad. The tradition has grown and someday will expand even further with our grandchildren standing to take down that special envelope.

Mike's spirit, like the Christmas spirit will always be with us.

This has been checked as true story and the idea is great. Ed.

Through Jesus Hope Lives

A Christmas Story

For a moment or perhaps a long while,
we are dropped into the depths of despair,
a tragedy of intense proportions. In the darkness we struggle with
difficult and often confusing feelings.

As Christians we often feel guilty about these feelings. All are true
human emotions, and necessary in enabling us to cope.

God understands our pain and our suffering.
He will wrap his loving arms around us,
He will be there when no one else can.
After a time we begin to feel his presence.
You can see a faint light in the distance.

This is the light of HOPE.

Moving toward the light -The Holy Spirit takes us by the hand helps
us to move even closer to the light. The
light of the Lord that shines into each of our lives.
Here in The Lords loving presence our souls and our
wounds begin to heal.

God has a plan for us and we can rest assured that we have been
called

here for a purpose. Our job is not yet finished.

We must continue to move forward.

We might not understand the sequence of events in our lives. We
might not understand the meaning of our suffering. But we have
not lost everything , we are not alone.

We will always have HOPE.

As the Holiday season approaches, let us remember that Hope
was born at Christmas,
His name is Jesus.
And Hope does live on.

THE WAY I SEE IT : The pivotal importance of the Middle East

It's astonishing how the epicentre of world news has always seemed to be what we call the 'Middle East'. Ever since history was first recorded, these lands have been its backdrop: great civilisations and powers, Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, and Persia occupied the world's centre stage, sometimes for centuries. When they were replaced, it was usually by another one of that short list.

The world's two greatest religions, Christianity and Islam, were born here, offspring of a smaller but even older one, Judaism. These very lands were the site of the Garden of Eden, the poetic source and beginning of the whole human story.

Sadly, these lands have also been marked out as battle-fields – and the apocalyptic message warns that they will be the site of the final great conflict, Armageddon. Today our TV screens are full of images of devastated towns and cities, destroyed by bombing and shelling. Is this not only the history but also the fate of the Middle East?

But now comes Christmas, and we hear a different message echoing from the same region. It was first heard in a field outside Bethlehem: 'Peace, goodwill among people'. The child who was born in a stable in the Middle East



nearly 2000 years ago was to be known as the 'Prince of Peace'. He came, the Bible says, to 'preach peace to those who are near, and peace to those who are far off'.

This is the great paradox. In the midst of conflict, in a land that had suffered enemy occupation for 300 years, there came a message of peace. Hard to hear over the noise of battle, but insistent, it will surely prove in the end to be the greatest gift that these much-abused lands have offered to the world.

St James the Least of All – final letter in the series

We have some sad and momentous news this month: after ten years and seven months in the job, the Rev Dr Gary Bowness has reluctantly decided that it is time for Uncle Eustace to 'bow out'. All good things must come to an end sometime, and thus Uncle Eustace retires this month. We will miss him! We thank Gary for all the pleasure the letters of Uncle Eustace has provided for us down the years. For anyone who would like a 'souvenir' of Uncle Eustace, you may like to purchase a copy of our published booklet of Uncle Eustace's letters, please email us at: enquiries@parishpump.co.uk

Farewell from Uncle Eustace

The Rectory
St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

And so, at the beginning of the New Year, you finally go to your own first parish and I, after 50 years of ordained ministry, am to move to a home for retired clergy. Let me give you some final words of advice.

Curates, you will have noticed, are forgiven everything. I hope you have appreciated this period of grace, because come 1st January, all that will change. You will then become responsible for everything that goes wrong in your church. You must be able to mend leaking taps, arrange flowers, mow the churchyard and run jumble sales. You will be expected to know the moment someone falls ill – preferably the day before. In addition, they will expect you to preach profound sermons in six minutes that will stir their souls but not upset them, and to lead a life of prayerful solitude while being the life and soul of the parish. From the day your predecessor left, he will have turned into a saint. *You* will be their new disappointment. Be assured that *whatever* you do, you will *always* disappoint someone. Sometimes you will manage to upset *everyone*.

Be prepared for phonecalls at 3am telling you that someone has left a light on in church, and shouldn't you go turn it off. You will be asked about car parking arrangements for the October Harvest Service by mid-January, while hymns for the 9 Lessons and Carols will be required by early summer. I suggest you buy in extra pullovers, overcoats and scarves for life in your vicarage. A good number of mousetraps may well come in useful too.

Welcome to your new life of an incumbent.

I, on the other hand, greatly relish the thought of no longer having to care about any parishioners. Instead, I shall become one myself – and am already planning my revenge. In fact, this afternoon, inspired by a large glass of sherry, I have begun a list of things I can complain about. The church is too cold, I don't know any of the hymns, the vicar can't preach, he never visits, and things are generally not as good as they used to be. True, I haven't actually chosen my new church yet, but no matter, I will voice all these complaints when I get there.

Of course, I will not be in church on Sunday mornings if it is raining, or on Sunday evenings if something good is on the television. Most of all, I look forward to sitting as far back in church as is possible, and starting a campaign to stop 'passing the peace'.

My new life as a parishioner will be richly rewarding. 50 years after ordination, I can hardly wait.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace



Keep it a surprise

Three-year-old Lily was helping her mother wrap a present for her father. While wrapping, her mother told Lily about keeping the present a secret so it would be a surprise. After the present was wrapped, Lily proudly put it under the tree.

When her father asked her if he could shake it and guess what's inside, she said, very seriously, "No, T-shirts don't rattle."

When Winston Churchill was president of a Black Country literary institute



MEMORIES of Sir Winston Churchill, who was voted the greatest Briton that ever lived by the British people in the year 2000, were brought back into focus for several generations on the fiftieth anniversary of his state funeral in London last Friday, January 30.

His leadership during the Second World War was second to none, and his speeches were legendary. But before his name became synonymous with winning the war in 1945, he had already been connected with many important events in the country's history, some famous, some infamous, and also some less well known, as Ian Bott, a well respected Black Country historian from Wednesbury, will explain: "You may find the fact that Winston Churchill was once the president of Wednesbury Literary Institute hard to believe, but its absolutely true.

"Founded in 1884, the Wednesbury Literary Institute was created to dispense an annual programme of lectures and other erstwhile entertainments, and the title of president was conferred upon the most eminent speaker who was engaged for the year's session, culminating with their presidential address at the Town Hall. Right from the start of the Institute's history in 1884 the committee were quite select in their choice of president and in that first year appointed the Right Hon the Earl of Shaftesbury KG as its first.

"Sixteen years later, on November 17, 1900, and just two weeks short of his twenty-sixth birthday, a then Mr Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill, the newly elected Conservative MP for Oldham in Lancashire, consented to an invitation by the committee to become the Wednesbury Literary Institute's 17th president, by which time he had already become a household name following a distinguished army career during the Boer War campaign.

His visit to Wednesbury on Tuesday May 7, 1901, was eagerly anticipated by the townspeople and on his arrival he was made the most welcome guest of the chairman of the Institute, the mayor, Councillor John Knowles JP and the mayoress, his daughter Bertha, at their large and very comfortable abode, Wolsley House.

Worsley House stood central to the family business of Knowles Tube Fitting Works which was established in 1850 in the town's Walsall Street, the site of which is now occupied by the residential development known as Carnegie Drive.

At the Town Hall that evening every available seat was taken long before the scheduled 8pm start to the proceedings. The waiting audience was entertained by borough organist Mr Thomas Frederick Bissell, who broke into the strains of 'See the conquering hero comes' as Winston Churchill ascended the stage to join the mayor and a dozen more civic dignitaries. The beautiful town hall organ, which had so melodiously serenaded the distinguished guest, was sadly dismantled in 1953 and removed to St Augustine's Church at Kensington in London.

"The audience commenced a lengthy, good spirited applause, showing full appreciation at the honour Mr Churchill had conferred upon the town in accepting the presidency of the institute. He was then formally introduced by the mayor, who remarked that they were delighted to have among them such a worthy member of the House of Marlborough, a good fighting family throughout history, and that their president's late father Lord Randolph Churchill had been such a splendid man, adding that gentlemen representing literature, science, art , music and drama had occupied the presidential chair, but he was sure none were more welcome than he who graced the meeting that night.

"Winston Churchill, who was loudly cheered on rising to speak to the audience, remarked that it was with very great pleasure and, he trusted, with a proper appreciation of the honour that had been conferred upon him, that he accepted the invitation of becoming president of the Wednesbury Literary Institute. Ever since his acceptance he had undertaken a serious responsibility and had been exerting his mind to think of a suitable subject to discourse upon when he delivered his presidential address. He thought long and hard about a subject important to the people of Wednesbury, but ultimately could do no better than speak on British trade; its extension, its preservation and its development.

"During his oratory he focused on the challenges that Britain faced in the world of trade and cited that many American cities had built bridges of trade to many countries, summoning his celebrated wit to point out that they didn't make bridges in America but here in Wednesbury they made the best.

"His lengthy speech was fully transcribed in the Midland Advertiser of Saturday May 11, 1901, for which I am indebted to the excellent staff of Sandwell CommunityArchive [Service](#).

"After Winston's speech, for which the applause resounded around the Town Hall for several minutes, a vote of thanks was proposed by the Wednesbury MP, Mr Walford D Green, a fellow Conservative who had also been elected the previous October. He commented that he was glad that one who had won for himself fame and common repute at such an early age, should have been brought face to face with a Wednesbury audience, concluding, with a remarkable degree of prophecy, that believing from what they had just heard, that if their speaker attained a lofty position in the state, as most thought he would, he would at all times and under all circumstances do that which he believed from the bottom of his heart was the best for Great Britain and of course the British Empire, as it still was back in 1901.

"In reply Winston expressed the pleasure it had afforded him to visit the town of Wednesbury, thanking the audience sincerely for their kind and enthusiastic reception. The evening concluded with the singing of the National Anthem. Then a huge crowd congregated on the street outside the Town Hall to give their famous guest a splendid send off as he was driven away along the Holyhead Road."

Men's curious reluctance to ask where they are going

If you are travelling far this Christmas, pray that your satnav works, or that there is a woman in the car. Research has found that men are so stubborn about NOT asking directions that they waste hours and miles every year. Over a life-time of travel, it works out to a wasted journey that stretches from Land's End to John O' Groats. Just six per cent of men will ask for help or check a map to avoid unnecessary travel. More than twice as many are so proud that they will persist until they find their route on their own, regardless of how long it takes them. (Which of course has inspired the joke: Why did the Children of Israel wander in the wilderness for 40 years? Because Moses wouldn't ask directions...) The survey of modern men was by TrekAce, which makes GPS units for walkers.

David Winter looks back with fondness on a great British war effort...you might make this local by asking your readers if any of their parents or other relatives were in the real 'Dad's Army'...

Farewell to Dad's Army – 70 years on

'Dad's Army' has been one of the BBC's most popular sit-coms, its characters' catch-phrases universally known: 'Don't panic!', 'You stupid boy!', 'We're doomed!' It means that generations of TV viewers feel they know all about the Home Guard. This month marks the date of its final disbandment, on December 31st 1945, seventy years ago.

The Home Guard – originally the 'Local Defence Volunteers' – came into being in the summer of 1940, when the Nazi forces were encamped across the Channel, waiting for orders to invade Britain. People were understandably nervous. Civilians clamoured to be given weapons so that they could defend their towns and villages.



In response, the Government began recruiting local volunteers – men who already possessed weapons (farmers with shot-guns, typically) and others who could make and use 'Molotov cocktails' – petrol bombs. The new prime minister, Winston Churchill, wanted something more recognisably military, and at his insistence these volunteers were mobilised in a 'citizen army' which he called the Home Guard. The Government expected about 150,000 volunteers – within a month there were 750,000.

Over the war years these men (and later a few women) who were either too young or too old for military service or deemed unfit for it, guarded air fields and strategic buildings, manned coastal look-outs, and watched for enemy parachutists, freeing regular soldiers for combat duties. Even so, 1206 members of the Home Guard were killed 'in action', mostly by bombs or rockets. Dubbed 'Dad's Army' at the time, their contribution to final victory was certainly no joke.



The Wit of Churchill



This is JP's final contribution this year on Churchill

I think I have kept the best for last - it's my favourite anyway. You may recall me referring to Churchill's relationships with female MPs in your October Mag.

Before I tell you what WSC said, please let me tell you about the lady to whom he said it.

Waldorf Astor was the Conservative MP for Plymouth from 1910 until 1919, when he was elevated to the peerage. He could no longer sit in the House of Commons and was succeeded by his wife, Nancy.

She was the first female MP ever to sit in the House of Commons and, would you believe, did not get on with WSC.

She is quoted as saying, 'I married beneath me - all women do', so perhaps her relationship with WSC should not come as a surprise'

The Churchills and the Astors were invited to spend a weekend at Blenheim by the then Duke of Marlborough.

Not a good decision, as Nancy & Winston argued ferociously the whole time, resulting in her saying,

'If I were your wife, I would put poison in your coffee'

Churchill famously replied, *'Nancy, If I were your husband , I would drink it !'*

And finally.....

Two non-Christians were talking about Christmas.

' I see that Christmas Day falls on a Friday this year'

'So it does, I hope its not on the 13th.'

We continue our column that looks at memorable dates in the month of December.

All in the month of DECEMBER

100 years ago:- on 8th Dec 1915, that the war poem *In Flanders Fields*, by Canadian physician Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, was first published in Punch magazine in the UK.

75 years ago:- on 12th Dec 1940, that the Sheffield Blitz began. The city was devastated by German bombs. More than 660 people were killed, 1,500 injured and 40,000 made homeless.

Also 75 years ago:- on 29th Dec 1940, that Germany dropped thousands of incendiary bombs and high explosives on the City of London, causing the worst fire damage since the Great Fire of 1666.

60 years ago:- on 1st Dec 1955, that African American civil rights activist Rosa Parks refused to give up her bus seat to a white man in Montgomery, Alabama, violating the city's racial segregation laws. This incident led to the birth of the modern American civil rights movement.

50 years ago:- on 8th Dec 1965, that The Race Relations Act (1965) went into effect in the UK. It banned racial discrimination in public places.

30 years ago:- on 2nd Dec 1985, that Philip Larkin, British poet, librarian and jazz critic, died.

25 years ago:- on 1st Dec 1990, that construction workers on the Channel Tunnel broke through the last wall of rock separating the two halves, and Britain and France were linked for the first time in tens of thousands of years.

20 years ago:- on 8th Dec 1995, that head teacher Philip Lawrence was stabbed to death outside his west London school while trying to protect a student from a gang of youths.

Also 20 years ago:- on 20th Dec 1995, that the Queen urged the Prince and Princess of Wales (Charles and Diana) to seek an early divorce.

Also 20 years ago:- on 21st Dec 1995, that the city of Bethlehem passed from Israeli to Palestinian control. On 26th Dec Israel also handed dozens of West Bank villages over to the Palestinian authorities.

Also 10 years ago:- on 13th Dec 2005, that US President George W Bush admitted that much of the intelligence used as a basis for invading Iraq had been wrong. But he defended the invasion because it had led to the removal of Saddam Hussein.

ALL DRESSED UP



Lois on one of her cruises

Remember Lois Plimmer a regular member of our 10.30 am congregation? Lois lived in Burlington Road and was an amazingly well travelled lady but no matter how hard I tried I could not get her to share some of her stories for the magazine.

However Dave Reeves of Age Concern Sandwell Day Centre managed to produce a collection of reminiscences from Lois and thanks to Lois's daughter Judith Page who kindly passed them on.

MY EDUCATION'S BEEN TRAVELLING

I had a very hard life. My father had no work and he was very strict with us. He was mostly means tested. When we were very young we were even given shoes. We didn't have a lot of food - bread and marge mostly and some stale fish. This was until I was about 12 years old. We came to Charlemont to live. We had a house then. Before, we only had rooms. It was the back of a shop - a general store. It was a pawn shop too. There was no staircase - we had to climb a ladder. I started work at 14 and then my brother started work and my father took all our money off us. My father was boxer - he was the featherweight champion in India during the war - the 1914-1918 war - and we used to have a boxing ring in the yard. He used to do a bit in the boxing booths on the fairground and earn a bit there too. That was just before we went to Charlemont.

My educations been travelling. After I was married, or rather since the 1950's, I went with a friendd to London for about 30 years until she died, and the last ten years with my cousin from Canada. Her husband stays behind to look after the pig farm and mine didn't want to go anyway - he used to go to Scotland with his friend.

I've had everything I wanted. You might say its a rags to riches story. I've done everything I wanted. Been all over the world. There's nothing I want.

Lois Plimmer

People and News

Birthday Celebrations - December 2015

2nd Michelle

5th Elliot



*Happy Birthday to you
Happy Birthday to you
May God Bless you and keep you
Happy Birthday to you.*

7th Piote

12th Tapas

25th Anna



*Happy Birthday to you
To Jesus be true
May the Lord bless you richly
In all that you do*

26th Rhena

31st Cilla

Remembrance - December 2015

6th Mrs Grice - All our loved ones in God's nearer presence.

13th Mr & Mrs E. Hall - Treasured memories of dear parents & sister.

20th Mr & Miss Johnson - In memory of a dear wife and mother.
In loving memory of F. J. H. Johnson who died May 7th 1964
aged 86 years. "At rest in the Lord".

Phoebe Jane Braden - In loving memory and with deep
gratitude for all her help to others. April 15th 1969.

27th Mrs Matthews - In loving memory of a loved husband.

*Grant unto them eternal rest, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine
upon them . May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the
mercy of God, rest in peace.*

SUNDAY MORNING PRAYER TIME

Every Sunday morning at 10.00am before the morning
service there is a time for quiet prayer.
All welcome. Please join us if you are able.

TUESDAY EVENING PRAYER TIME

Every Tuesday evening at 8.00pm.

A time time for open intercession or quiet prayer run by Kevin. All welcome. Please join us if you are able.



Churches Together will be meeting in Kings Square between 12 noon - 1pm
Saturday 12th December
Saturday 19th December
to spread the True Message of Christmas.
Come along and sing and help us to witness to this marvellous event beyond our Church Community.
Yours in Christ. Liz Farley

Church Music



Great to see Helen and David leading our music worship over the last few weeks. Be good if one or two more budding musicians/singers would join them.



Operation Christmas Child Shoe Boxes

Many, many thanks to everyone who packed shoe boxes so beautifully and got them in on time. Colin and Jim took 22 boxes to the drop-off in the middle of November and there were a couple of donations too. It's lovely to have been able to support this charity again this year, taking the love of Jesus to children who are in need and may never otherwise know Jesus's love and care. Thank you for your generosity and I will let you know any information I hear about where the boxes go.



Love. Christine

League of Friends Sandwell Hospital

WELCOME THE DONATIONS of BOOKS and MAGAZINES

**PLEASE KEEP THEM
COMING**

If you need any further
information please see
Madeline Page.
Thank you all very much
for your generous
donations.



West Bromwich Food Bank

The Food Bank collect and
stores food ready to freely
distribute to individuals or
families in crisis (who cannot
afford to feed themselves).

* Milk (UHT or powdered) *
Sugar (500g) * Fruit juice (carton)
Soup * Pasta sauces * Sponge
pudding (tinned) * Tomatoes
(tinned) * Cereals * Rice pudding
(tinned) * Tea Bags/instant
coffee * Instant mash potato *
Rice/pasta * Tinned meat/fish *
Tinned fruit * Jam * Biscuits or
snack bars * Or cash donation



SUNDAY MORNING PRAYER TIME

Every Sunday morning at 10.00am before the morning
service there is a time for quiet prayer.
All welcome. Please join us if you are able.

TUESDAY EVENING PRAYER TIME

Every Tuesday evening at 8.00pm.
A time time for open intercession or quiet prayer run by
Kevin. All welcome. Please join us if you are able.

Every Monday and Wednesday mornings at 8.00am there is a time
for quiet prayer. All welcome. Please join us if you are able.

MIDWEEK MORNING PRAYER TIME





Christmas Services



Holy Trinity Church warmly invite you to join us in our celebration of Christmas



Nativity Service

Sunday 20th December
10.30 am



Candlelight Carol Service with seasonal choir

Sunday 20th December
6.30 pm



Christmas Drop-In's

Tuesday 22nd and Wednesday 23rd December
2.00 - 4.00 pm
Come and join us for games/chat/coffee



First Communion of Christmas

Thursday 24th December - 11.30 pm



Christmas Day Family Service

Friday 25th December
10.30 am



Come and join us in the celebration of the birth of our Lord

Find Holy Trinity
on Facebook
[www.facebook.com/
pages](http://www.facebook.com/pages)

**holy trinity
church**
1 burlington road
west bromwich
B70 6LF



Vicar: The Revd. Neil Robbie