



NEWSLETTER



November -
December 2025

ELDER'S MESSAGE

As Christmas draws near, we see lights shining, hear music everywhere, and look forward to time with family, giving, and celebration. But for believers, Christmas means much more than festive traditions or gifts. It is a time to remember the greatest gift ever given: Jesus Christ, God's Son, sent to bring salvation to a world in need.

We often judge gifts by their beauty and cost. However, the gift of Jesus is beyond anything we could ever determine. John 3:16 states, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This verse reveals what Christmas is truly about: God's love demonstrated through an incredible sacrifice.

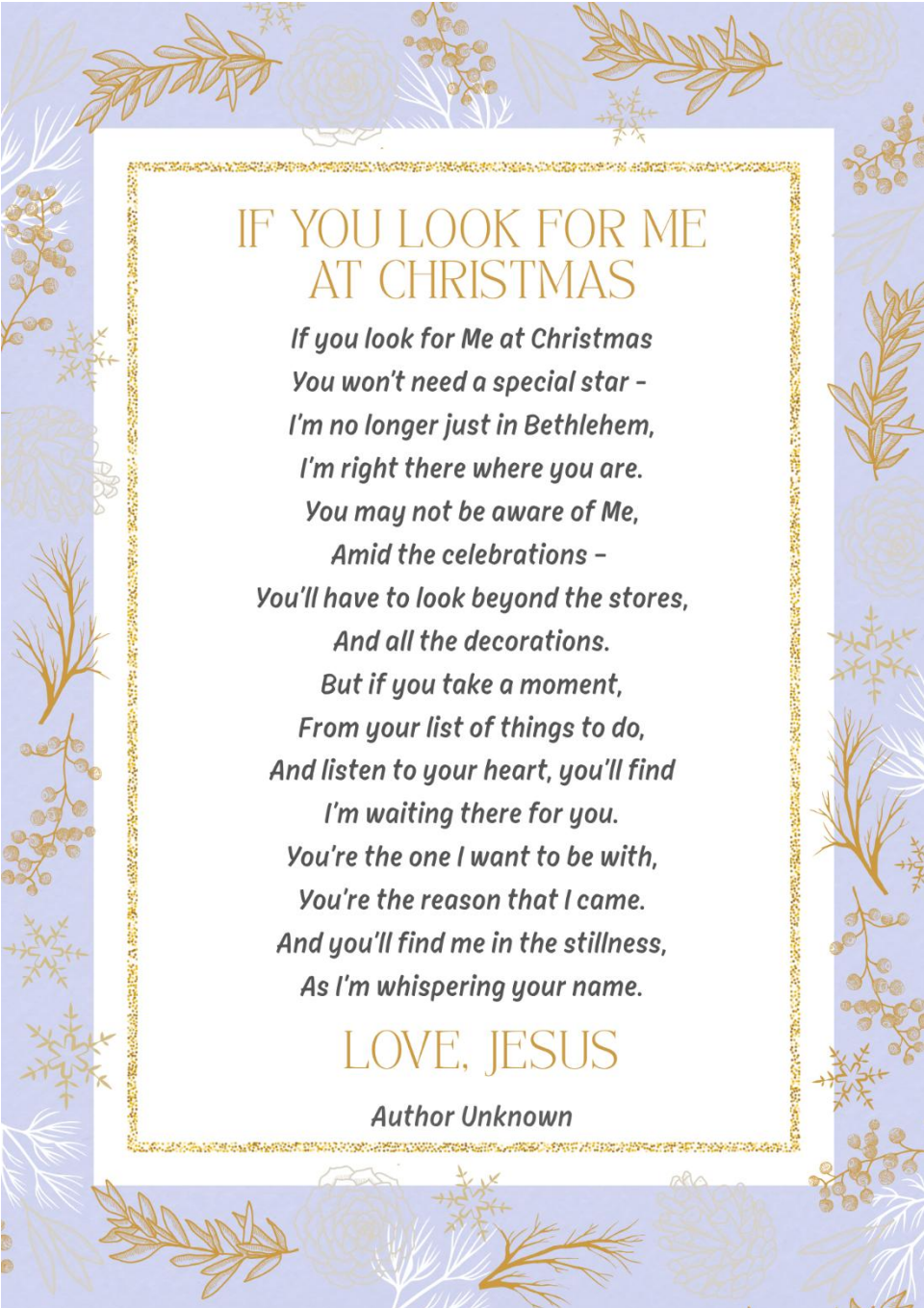
In a humble manger in Bethlehem, the Creator of the universe became human. The King of kings was born not in a palace but among the humble, demonstrating that God's grace is available to everyone—rich and poor, strong and weak, righteous and sinner alike. This is the miracle of Christmas: Heaven reaching down to earth so humanity can be lifted up to Heaven.

While the world rushes to buy and give, let us pause and remember that salvation cannot be bought or earned. It is freely offered through faith in Christ alone. Jesus came not only to be born but to die—to bear our sins on the cross and to rise again, conquering death forever. That is the true meaning of Christmas: God's love made visible, eternal life made possible.

As we unite with family and friends to observe this special season, we must cultivate a spirit of profound gratitude. Furthermore, we are called to communicate the central message of Christmas: the most significant gift is not a material possession, but the redemptive sacrifice of Jesus Christ. In summary, the essence of Christmas resides in recognising and sharing the transformative impact of Christ's birth and atonement, which offers humanity the hope of eternal life.

As the Apostle Paul proclaims, "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!" (2 Corinthians 9:15).

God Bless
Emmanuel



IF YOU LOOK FOR ME AT CHRISTMAS

*If you look for Me at Christmas
You won't need a special star -
I'm no longer just in Bethlehem,
I'm right there where you are.
You may not be aware of Me,
Amid the celebrations -
You'll have to look beyond the stores,
And all the decorations.
But if you take a moment,
From your list of things to do,
And listen to your heart, you'll find
I'm waiting there for you.
You're the one I want to be with,
You're the reason that I came.
And you'll find me in the stillness,
As I'm whispering your name.*

LOVE, JESUS

Author Unknown

FAITH AT THE SHARP END

Mr David Leach (61)

Occupation: Neonatal Nurse.

I started nursing at the age of forty; Prior to that I was an engineer. As a young engineer my faith became showing my workmates I was different and Jesus was the difference. I didn't smoke drink and was a virgin for this I was ridiculed daily. That was my first experience of the strength of faith and reliance on Jesus.

But some years later when I became a nurse faith was very much a Calling! During my training I was always looking for an opportunity to bring something to the NHS that wasn't on offer! Which sounds arrogant I know but faith often drives you to want to make a difference and not just be a nurse.

When I became a neonatal nurse. I saw dads who were frightened to get involved in their baby's care, many men needed that encouraging voice for which they were always thankful. So, my faith was more a practical expression of God's love.

Twenty years on I now work in the community supporting families once they leave hospital. It's great to see families beginning to flourish and enjoy their new baby. My role is now more educational and although the NHS suggests we don't share our faith with or patients or their families it is important for me to let them see a care for them that comes from a faith in a loving and caring God.

During the period when the country was in lockdown and nurses were considered essential workers. Due to my family dynamics, I was in a bubble on my own. At the time it was extremely hard, working full time and although it didn't feel like it, Gods provision comforted me.

COVID-19 meant I was often entering rooms of women who were infected, there was a genuine fear in the workplace, and some staff would make every excuse to not enter these rooms and who could blame them. It was a very difficult time, but God I believe kept me safe.

As a nurse you have some great experiences, and of course some not so great I'm grateful that I have never been present when a baby has passed away and have only seen one baby who sadly passed

away who I had briefly seen alive. I was invited by my more senior colleagues to go and say my goodbyes! I was struck by how perfect she looked. My thoughts reminded me of a song "so fearfully and wonderfully made" the lyrics go on to say, "how can they say there is no God." A reflection that stays with me but not in a sad way, a reflective way as I stand in awe of the giver of life and the amazement of his creation

I am glad that often my job brings joy and is at a time when mothers are full of joy as the baby, they have been looking forward to meeting has arrived even if it is a little early. The joy over parents' faces is clear for all to see. Yes, there is a lot of anxiety around when on occasions a baby becomes poorly parents are grateful for our knowledge and care for their family as I am grateful for Gods care and knowledge of me.

Sadly, but I do understand that officially we are not allowed to pray with the families however, I daily pray that God will help me to bring the best care I can to those who need it.

There have been two occasions in which I have laid hands on babies in prayer these were babies born to Christian friends. Praise God both babies that were quite poorly both recovered and went home to their families with no issues. One of the babies was struggling with his breathing and the consultant said we needed to intubate I placed my hand on his chest and the oxygen levels in his blood instantly increased and the consultant said we didn't need to intubate anymore A miracle? the child didn't require any support with his breathing.

In my occupation every shift is different, every circumstance a challenge, but my faith carries me through - Thank You JESUS my Lord my salvation.

My favourite hymn has to be O thou who came at from above by Charles Wesley 1762

"Jesus, confirm my heart's desire to work and speak and think for Thee, still let me guard the holy fire and still stir up Thy gift in me".

This was my heart's desire 40 years ago and still is today
David Leach.

PAST EVENTS

By Jan Collins

On Friday 31ST October we had our 2nd Craft morning at Coffee 3:16. It was great to meet new people and share the joy of crafting. With so much darkness surrounding this day of Halloween we always as a fellowship open the church to an alternative to the darkness that surrounds us daily. The crafts were great, and the children signed in by doing a handprint of each child in yellow. This was a great start to a great morning. Thank you all who helped us make this possible. Watch this space with more craft days.



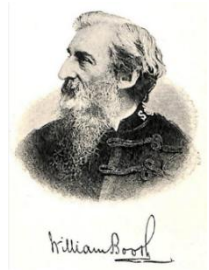
The Light Party was another success, and all enjoyed it very much. There was a calm atmosphere despite so many excited children. There were the bouncy castle, various crafts and games with prizes at the end. Members the church ensured that all the children were given refreshments. At the end Nahum Evans (Church Deacon) gave a talk on Creation and the "Light of the World" dispelling the darkness of the world with light, hope and goodness. The good news is that God can give us new life and light as we follow His ways. Looking forward also to Jesus' return which has been promised to us in the Bible.



THE SALVATION ARMY

You will see them in almost every town. Singing and Playing this Christmas - BUT DID YOU KNOW.

The Salvation Army began on the streets of East London in 1865 when Methodists, William and Catherine Booth, abandoned the traditional concept of a church pulpit to take God's word directly to the people. The movement grew rapidly outside of London and became known as the Christian Mission, with William Booth as its General-Superintendent.



In 1878 the name was changed to The Salvation Army and the Organisation adopted a quasi-military structure members wearing a military style uniform.

The Salvation Army movement spread rapidly across the British Isles and within decades were established across the globe in countries such as America, Canada, Australia, France, Switzerland, India, South Africa, Iceland, and Germany.

Today, The Salvation Army is a church and charity that is active in virtually every corner of the world and serves in more than 130 countries offering God's hope and love to all those in need without discrimination.

SCROOGE – A CHRISTMAS CAROL

There is one certainty this Christmas you will once more have the opportunity to watch on TV the magnificent Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens. It's the story of a wealthy, miser, who hates everything except himself and his money..... A Christmas Carol.

Dickens introduces us to Ebenezer Scrooge on Christmas Eve. The place is London, the time mid 1800s, Scrooge is a bitter old man, he is rich and hates everything to do with Christmas. "Bah Humbug"; He keeps his staff working all of the Christmas period and he himself rejects any aspect of joy Giving to the poor at this time or any time is a waste of money, as he believes that they

(the poor) are uneconomical. He has no time for the kindness of life, and that includes the sick, needy, the uneducated. Scrooge is, in short, an awful human being by anyone's standards.

As Charles Dickens unfolds the story, we find Scrooge on Christmas Eve alone at home with his thoughts; the recent death of his business partner, his feckless relatives, "good riddance to them". He is happy to be alone and away from all the money wasting nonsense that is going on in the streets outside his house. But as this evening passes into night, much will change for Mr Scrooge. Scrooge is forewarned of his mortality and the price of selfishness, and greed in the form of three spirits that will visit him that night. Christmas Eve.

First Visitation is the Ghost of Christmas past - Takes Scrooge back to happier times as a young man, but his ambition turns him to materialism and greed. He rejects his family, friends and faith.

Second Visitation, the Ghost of Christmas present - Where he is confronted by how his attitude to life has impacted on all who have encountered him.

Final Visitation the ghost of Christmas Future - Scrooge is forced to watch as his life cascades into morbid, selfish, enmity, finally death and separation.

Three life stages – Idolatry, Selfishness, Mortality

But here we see the GOOD NEWS, Scrooge after being confronted with the truth of his life, repents of all his misdeeds and puts right all that he can. He returns to faith and shares his wealth with the needy. He is a new creation a new man, respected, and loved by his community.

Dickens graphic Christmas story of Scrooge has in fact a strong Christian Message. We may wish to reject the comparison of Scrooge with our life and behaviour, but we must concede that consumerism can and does desensitise us to the reality of a Godless amoral World.

But as Dickens's story unfolds, we see it's never too late to Change. When you allow Jesus Christ to invade your Life. You can become a New Creation, the old will pass away a new life will come. We begin to understand the Love of God. We Experience a new beginning which is truly life changing.

NO GHOST, JUST JESUS AND THE LOVE OF GOD

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT US. WERE HERE IF YOU NEED US - HOPE CHURCH SHAW OLDHAM and COFFEE 3:16

ANNUAL GMA DOVE AWARDS

Friday 7th October 2025 was the 56th Annual GMA Dove Awards, held in Nashville, Tennessee, this is such a big night for the gospel music.

Song of the Year went to Hard Fought Hallelujah by Brandon Lake and Jelly Roll

Forest Frank was a big winner of the night coming away with 3 awards

- Artist of the Year
- Pop / Contemporary Recorded Song of the Year for Your Way's Better
- Pop / Contemporary Album of the Year for Child of God

Phil Wickham came away with 2 awards

- Inspirational Recorded Song of the Year for The Jesus Way
- Christmas / Special Event Album of the Year for Hallelujah! It's Christmas

New Artist of the Year went to Leanna Crawford

Worship Album of the Year was awarded to Elevation Worship for When Wind Meets Fire

Rock/Contemporary Recorded Song of the Year was awarded to Strings and Heart for Sunset Silhouette

Children's Recorded Song of the Year was awarded to Shout Praises Kids for Siempre Que Me Muevo

Feature Film of the Year was awarded to The King of Kings

TV Series of the Year went to The Chosen

A Full list of Winners can be found at

<https://doveawards.com/awards/2025-winners>



EVENTS AT COFFEE 3:16

MACMILLAN CAKE SALE

On Friday 26th September we joined the national Macmillan coffee morning, combining all of our bakers' efforts to provide a delicious array of cakes and bakes, with all proceeds from cake sales donated to Macmillan cancer research. We did this in memory of one of our first and most loyal customers, Linda, who sadly lost her battle with cancer in August this year.



We had a great turnout and it was wonderful to see the coffee shop busy and thriving. We raised a total of £318.74 so we were very thankful to all who came to help us support this great cause.

COFFEE 3:16 TURNS ONE!



On 22nd October we celebrated a year since Coffee 3:16 opened its doors to the public. Building on what was our already well established coffee morning, we extended to opening to the community of Shaw three days a week as a coffee shop offering a great selection of hot drinks, cakes and light bites. We extended our menu in January this year to offer light lunches, which have proved popular and helped increase footfall.

To mark the date we sent out invites for people to join us to celebrate this great milestone. We offered homemade celebratory cupcakes for a bargain price of £1 with 100% of proceeds donated to the Stroke Association in loving memory of Christine Cator's mum, Pauline, who sadly passed away almost a year to the date. Thanks to those who generously donated and purchased our celebratory cupcakes, we raised £74.30 for the Stroke Association.



The faces behind Coffee 3:16 (minus a few who sadly couldn't make the photo)! From those who helped with the building work right at the very beginning, to the bakers, the table runners, the baristas, the food preparers and order takers. So much effort goes into each week and countless hours have been lovingly sacrificed by our incredible team of volunteers. Without them none of what we have achieved would be possible so we thank them for their continued commitment and sacrifice week in and week out. But most of all, we thank God, who is at the heart of all that we do at Coffee 3:16; who daily helps us and provides all that we need to make this possible and who is the reason for the love that is felt by so many who come in and comment that there is something different about this place. We love being part of Coffee 3:16 and having the opportunity to serve and get to know the community of Shaw. What a joy this past year has been and we look forward to all that God has in store for us ahead!

WANT TO BE A PART OF SUPPORTING THIS GREAT MINISTRY?

There are so many ways that you can support the work of Coffee 3:16, not least of which includes prayer, which is the most vital work underpinning all that we do, so please do continue to pray for the team and for the impact Coffee 3:16 has in the community, for the glory and honour of God.

If you would like to find out more about how you can practically be involved in this ministry then please speak to Hannah for more information.

NORMAN & ELAINE SYKES

Hello all, Norman and Elaine here, with a bit of information about us. We started attending Hope in 2023, believing that God was calling us to serve him in our local church. We were made welcome by the fellowship and felt at home straight away. Our plan was to come along on a Sunday and, perhaps, attend a house fellowship but no more. There is a saying, "Man plans and God laughs." Don't we know it!

Norman has slotted into the worship rota, playing the cajon and I have taken on the welcome packs. We are both heavily involved with Coffee 3:16 and feel that this is one of the reasons God led us to Hope. The café has been open for 12 months now and we have seen it grow and develop in this time from coffee and cake to soup, toasties and paninis with salad. Opening times and days have been adjusted to reflect footfall. We have been blessed in this ministry; relationships with other volunteers have deepened and strengthened and it's a joy to chat with customers as we build a regular customer base. Izabella shared recently, "You are the only bible some people will ever read. Be a living epistle in the dark world we live in and God will delight in you." Amen to that.

We believe we have grown in our relationship with Jesus and with the body here over our time spent here. We thank God for the wisdom of the leadership who are always seeking God's lead, and importantly, following him.



AN OLD MAN'S THOUGHTS ON CHRISTMAS

Before I became a Christian, many years ago as a young father bringing up young children, I found Christmas profoundly sad. I watched my children opening presents in comfort and safety but couldn't help thinking of the profound suffering and poverty that there was, and still is, in the world.

As the years have passed, I still get the same intense sadness for the same reasons, but it has become harder now because I have found the whole point of Christmas that has been largely forgotten in the western world. Christmas has become an economic burden to many who are forced by peer pressure to spend money that they don't have. It has now become a time for feasting and drinking far beyond our normal habits, and parents worry about what the future will bring. The world is in a mess, but there still stands One amongst us who can change all that for those who will receive Him.

I have learned now that the greatest gift anyone could receive was given to us all on that first Christmas so long ago. The Son of God came, the Prince of Peace, the Redeemer, the one who would give His life that we might truly live. The one who was born into poverty in a stable, celebrated by the angel choirs and seen by only a few shepherds. His mission was to live a sinless life and take the wrath of God and pay the penalty for the sin and shame of those who would receive Him and believe in Him. His name is JESUS.

Today He hears the cry of every heart and still lives amongst us and waits to be invited into our lives. He will change your life if you will let Him in. Let me sign off with the words of a very familiar carol:-

"What can I give Him poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb;

If I were a rich man I would play my part

So, what can I give Him?

GIVE MY HEART

May your Christmas be blessed!

John



Shaw Lights Switch On





HOPE CHURCH CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE

SUNDAY 21ST DECEMBER



10.30AM



FOLLOWED BY REFRESHMENTS



Hope Church
30 Eastway
Shaw, Oldham
OL2 8NY



BOOK CLUB

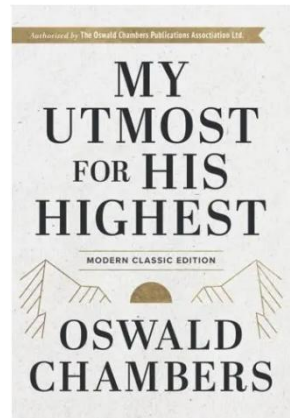
Reviewed by Terry Sullivan

MY UTMOST FOR HIS HIGHEST by Oswald Chambers

The Scottish born preacher led a full but short life. He tutored in philosophy, did a worldwide preaching tour in 1906-1907, was the Principal of a Bible college, and ministered to soldiers in Egypt of Christ He is most noted for this devotional classic.

"Does it really matter that our circumstances are difficult?

Why shouldn't they be! If we give way to self-pity and indulge in the luxury of misery, we remove God's riches from our lives and hinder others from entering His provision. No sin is worse than the sin of self-pity, because it removes God from the throne of our lives, replacing Him with our own self-interests. It causes us to open our mouths only to complain, and we simply become spiritual sponges always absorbing, never giving, and never being satisfied" - Oswald Chambers



As the above quotation suggests this is not a book for those who consider themselves important to God, on the contrary. This is a Book that plonks you at the foot of the Cross of Christ and asks the question "Am I worth it"

Oswald Chambers, 1874-1917, died at age 43.

This book is most successful of his thirty books, first published in 1924 by his wife Gertrude 'Biddy' Hobbs Chambers, it's a daily devotional composed of 365 selections of Chamber's talks, each of about 500 words. The work has never been out of print and has been translated into 39 languages.

CALEB'S KITCHEN



Gingerbread cookies

This is the recipe I like to use when making gingerbread.

You can find the recipe on the BBC Good Food website.

Ingredients

100g salted butter

3 tbsp golden syrup

100g dark brown soft sugar

1/2 tsp bicarbonate of soda

1 tbsp ground ginger

1 tsp ground cinnamon

225g plain flour

50g icing sugar

Method

Step 1

Heat the butter, syrup and sugar together in a small pan until melted, stirring occasionally. Set aside to cool slightly.

Step 2

Mix together the bicarb, ginger, cinnamon and flour in a large bowl. Pour in the buttery syrup mixture and stir to combine, then use your hands to bring together to form a dough. Add up to 1 tbsp of milk to combine if needed. The dough will be soft at this point, but it'll firm up in the fridge.

Step 3

Put the dough on a sheet of baking parchment, shape into a rectangle, and lay another sheet of parchment on top of it. Roll the dough out to a thickness of 1/2cm. Transfer to a baking sheet to keep it flat, leaving the parchment in place, then chill in the fridge for 1 hr.

Step 4

Heat the oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5 and line a large baking sheet with more baking parchment. Remove the dough from the fridge and cut out shapes using a cookie cutter.

Step 5

Place the shapes, spread apart, on the lined baking sheet, and bake for 10-12 mins. Leave to cool completely on the baking sheet.

Step 6

Meanwhile, mix the icing sugar with 1-2 tbsp water — you want to create a consistency that's thick and pipeable, and not too thin or it will run. Decorate the cooled biscuits with the icing using a piping bag with a thin nozzle.

ENTERTAINMENT CORNER

My favourite Christian songs

1. Soul on Fire – Third Day
2. Goodness of God – Bethel Music
3. Refuge - Skillet
4. Thank you, Jesus for the Blood Applied – Charity Gayle
5. Tear Off the Roof – Brandon Lake
6. Oceans (where feet may fail) – Hillsong United
7. The Lion is Rising – The Veil & Flame
8. The Truth – Megan Woods
9. Confidence – Sanctus Real
10. Who You Say I Am – Hillsong Worship

Now normally here we would be looking at hymns but in a nod to Christmas I have done my favourite Christmas Carols instead (not to be confused with Christmas Songs as my favourite on that list is Driving Home for Christmas by Chris Rea) but here we go

1. Silent Night
2. Peace on Earth / Little Drummer Boy
3. Carol of the Bells
4. Do You Hear What I Hear
5. Away in a Manger
6. O' Holy Night
7. Deck the halls
8. O' Little Town of Bethlehem
9. In the Bleak Midwinter
10. Little Donkey

I Can Only Imagine was a 2018 film about the song of the same name, how it came about and the band Mercy Me. It is an amazing film, worth the 2 hours of your time to watch. I Can Only Imagine 2 will hit the cinemas in the US February 20, 2026, won't be long before it's here.

As I was compiling this list 'Little Donkey' kept playing in my mind, taking me back to my childhood and one year in particular, I was around 7 years old and in the Christmas Nativity. I played an angel, and the whole performance I had to stand with my arms crossed in front of me, all through practice I was constantly shouted at for dropping my arms.

"Keep still Cirsty" – I still can't keep still.

SNOW STORMS

There was once a man who did not believe in God. His wife was a devout believer and diligently raised her children in the faith. He sometimes gave her a hard time about her belief and mocked her religious observances. "It's all nonsense --It's such a ridiculous story," he said.

One snowy day, she and the children left for church while he stayed home. After they had departed, the winds grew stronger, and the snow turned into a blinding snowstorm. He sat down to relax before the fire for the evening. Then he heard a loud thump, something hitting against the window... And still another thump. He looked outside but could not see anything. So, he ventured outside and in the field near his house he saw, a flock of geese. They were apparently flying to look for a warmer area down south, but they had been caught in the snowstorm. The storm had become too blinding and violent for the geese to fly or see their way. They were stranded on his farm, with no food or shelter, unable to do more than flutter their wings and fly in aimless circles. He wanted to help them. He thought to himself, the barn would be a great place for them to stay. It is warm and safe; surely, they could spend the night and wait out the storm. So, he opened the barn doors for them. He waited, watching them, hoping they would notice the open barn and go inside. Nevertheless, they did not notice the barn or realize what it could mean for them. He moved closer toward them to get their attention, but they just moved away from him out of fear.

He went into the house and came back with some bread, broke it up, and made a bread trail to the barn. They still did not catch on. Starting to get frustrated, he went over and tried to shoo them toward the barn. They panicked and scattered into every direction except toward the barn. Nothing he did could get them to go into the barn where there were warmth, safety, and shelter. Feeling totally frustrated, he exclaimed, "Why don't they follow me? Can't they see this is the only place where they can survive the storm? How can I possibly get them into the one place to save them?"

He thought for a moment and realized that they just would not follow a human. He said to himself, "How can I possibly save them? The only way would be for me to become like those geese. If only I could become like one of them. Then I could save them. They would follow me, and I would lead them to safety."

At that moment, he stopped and considered what he had said. The words reverberated in his mind: If only I could become like one of them, then I could save them. Then, at last, he understood God's heart towards mankind... and he fell on his knees in the snow.

WEEKLY PROGRAMME



Sunday Services start each week with Prayer in the office at 9.45am. All Welcome to this very important time before our service which then starts at 10.30am. There is also opportunity for prayer during the service. We serve refreshments in the Cafe area after the service. Creche facilities available. On the Last Sunday of the month we hold a family service which will involve the youth and children and this is followed by a Bring and Share Lunch.

Monday 9.30am to 12 noon. The Church is open for prayer. Come when you can between these times and stay for as long, or as little as you can. Come and seek God together as He calls us to commit everything, we do to Him.
Philippians 4:5-7

Tuesday Evening at 8 pm on Zoom is the Elders Meeting.

Wednesday is our Life Groups. We start at 7.30 pm with refreshments and then move into a time of discussion about the biblical teaching that was brought on the Sunday before, and we then pray together. Please speak to Dave or Emmanuel if you'd like more details or if you'd like to be a part of a group.

Thursday is Coffee Morning that starts at 10 am till 12noon.

Friday is our Youth Café night, which is held at church mostly once per month and is announced in Church when it is on, Activities planned for the youth group usually start at 7.30pm and finish by 9pm.

Saturday once a month during Summer is our Outreach Event into Shaw. We meet at 1.30pm for worship and prayer. At 3pm we meet up again for coffee (or tea), cake and a chat. See Noticeboard for dates.

**Coffee 3:16 is open for business between 9.30am and 3.30pm
Wednesday to Friday. Serving delicious drinks, food & cake.**

Merry *
Christmas +