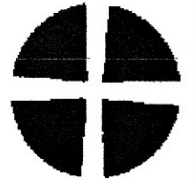


# The Avenue Methodist Church



The Living Well Centre  
at The Avenue  
Methodist Church

Wincham Road, Sale, Cheshire M33 4PL

The Methodist Church  
of Great Britain

Love, Serve,  
Go & Grow

## Newsletter



DEC/JAN 2017/18

It's that time of year!

With the commercialism of Christmas fully active in trying to get folk to increase their easily generated debt in the season from November through to January (sometimes referred to as Christmas), we're in the season of nonsense!

It's a crazy time!

With all available opportunities taken to maximise the illusion that everyone's having a wonderful time, it's no wonder the flipside of the illusion is reality, where people struggle to carry on. Every year the falseness is perpetuated!

It's an unbelievable time!

The Creator of everything became a human being in order to show us the way to live. With the payment being free, our response being genuine the Creator blesses us in every way, now that sounds like a real Christmas offer!

Blessings in Jesus,

*Richard*

Nick's Newsletter

### Light party

On the 31st October we held our Light party (a positive alternative to Halloween).

We saw a total of 87 people 41 of those were children, this was such a fun event for us to run, all the families heard a positive message about being light in the world.

A massive thank you again to all those who helped to make this event such a success.

## **Nativity service**

This year on the **17th December** we will have one special combined service, both the breakfast church and the Traditional service will join together as one for a special nativity service starting at **10am**.

Please make a note in your diary and feel free to come dressed as one of the nativity characters.

## **Christingle service**

On Christmas Eve **Sunday 24th December**, we will be running a special Christingle service starting at **3:30pm** with refreshments after the service. This service is suitable for the whole family and offers an hour on a busy Christmas Eve to celebrate together.

## **A story about making a difference**

Early one morning, a man was walking along the shore after a big storm had passed and found the vast beach littered with starfish as far as the eye could see, stretching in both directions.

Off in the distance, the old man noticed a small boy approaching. As the boy walked, he paused every so often and as he grew closer, the man could see that he was occasionally bending down to pick up an object and throw it into the sea. The boy came closer still and the man called out, "Good morning! May I ask what it is that you are doing?"

The young boy paused, looked up, and replied "Throwing starfish into the ocean. The tide has washed them up onto the beach and they can't return to the sea by themselves," the youth replied. "When the sun gets high, they will die, unless I throw them back into the water."

The old man replied, "But there must be tens of thousands of starfish on this beach. I'm afraid you won't really be able to make much of a difference."

The boy bent down, picked up yet another starfish and threw it as far as he could into the ocean. Then he turned, smiled and said, "It made a difference to that one!"

I'm so pleased looking back over 2017 and at all the things that have been done, remembering all the families that have come through the church door and all the children who have heard some part of the Christian message.

I look forward to 2018 and all the things that we know will be done and the things that we have yet to experience – Thanks be to God!

*Nick*

Children and Family Worker

## **31<sup>st</sup> October Light Party**

A room full of people of all ages sitting down together to enjoy a meal of pasta and garlic bread followed by choc ices. That was the scene that you were greeted with if you came along to the light party. The tables were decorated with light bracelets, crayons and quizzes. The room itself was alive with twinkly lights, lanterns, music and the general feeling of fun and everyone was dressed in bright colours. Finger lights were also available at the door as you came in.

After the meal the children and the adults were invited to play games, make crafts involving lights, sing songs, decorate a party bag, the list goes on. Before we knew it the time had crept round to 6.15 and we put on our coats and collected our lights and took the light outside and around the Church. What a wonderful

sight. Looking back at the hall from outside we could see the lights twinkling inside and the glow of the coloured lights.

Every child then collected a sweet treat to put in their party bags along with the book marks and other goodies already in their bags and sadly it was time to go home. Adults and children alike suitable tired, but full of comments about the wonderful time they had enjoyed. Thank you to Nick and Dee for the planning of this wonderful event and to all the volunteers.

Last year we welcomed 42 people to this event, this year there were just under 100. Next year looks like being a very big event. People from Lego club, breakfast church, tiddlywinks, toddlers and neighbours all came along to this event.

Below are some comments from families who attended the light party;

"I just wanted to say a Massive thank you to you, Nick & all involved for the amazing evening. The boys both had so much fun and everyone was so lovely and friendly. We haven't stopped talking about it all night. I had so much fun, the boys did and I didn't feel nervous. Everyone that I had the chance to speak with was just lovely and friendly. Everyone was so helpful and friendly. It was amazing, and you all put so much thought, time and effort in, and that really did show. Thank you xxx"

"Thank you all for such a wonderful and special evening we truly enjoyed every minute!! ❤️ it's lovely to see my daughter go off and do things crafty and dancing on her own she feels so comfortable and safe around all you guys. I'm truly grateful ❤️ ❤️ so thank you so, so much xxx"

### **Jesus - LIGHT OF THE WORD!**

Over 80 people attended our Light party on 31st October. They were all welcomed, fed a tasty hot meal and pudding, were offered 7 different crafts to create, had games to get involved in and above all were celebrating the LIGHT of Jesus Christ.

These people chose to attend a party that is different to what society celebrates on 31st October and that makes my heart truly happy. How amazing that we as the Church get to offer people an alternative event to attend. I have no doubt that this speaks volumes to those who are not comfortable with Halloween and will reassure them that they are not alone and therefore do not need to uncomfortably conform.

Although it is not the number of people to be celebrated who attend our events I hope that we can all be encouraged that we seem to be on the right path.

I thank God for his guidance and grace as we plod on forwards on His mission to grow His Kingdom and I thank Him that he uses us and all of our different gifts and abilities along the way

Jesus said:

“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

The future at The Avenue Methodist Church truly is very bright! Praise God!

We are now very much looking forward to our Christmas outreach events and celebrations and on to 2018!  
Dee x

### **Be a Santa to a Senior**

This year the Avenue Methodist Church is a drop off point for this wonderful activity organised by Home Instead based in Broadheath

Please look out for the collection box in the foyer and donate chocolates, biscuits, toiletries, scarves, gloves, bracelets etc and do not forget to fill out the gift card attached. The ladies in the office at Home Instead will

co-ordinate and wrap the presents before they are given out, so any gift however large or small that you wish to donate will be made full use of

The gifts are distributed to hospitals, pharmacies, community centres, elderly people on their own. Last year they were able to donate over 750 parcels to senior people living on their own.

### **The Foodbank Christmas story**

A gentleman who used to use the foodbank himself has started a fundraising campaign this year to provide a three course Christmas meal for 120 guests at Urban Burger bar in Altrincham for free. There are 5 foodbanks in Trafford and if you have been referred to the foodbank in the past you could qualify for this Christmas meal. The volunteers are already in place to help on Christmas day and if the fundraising goes well there may also be presents on the day. There are 2 time slots 12-2.30 and 3-5.30pm. It will be a stress free fun filled day of food, laughter and good cheer.

The menu is starting with Festive Soup, followed by Turkey, beef, gammon or a vegetarian option and then Christmas pudding, Yule Log and ice cream. Any enquiries and bookings can be made at deanurbanburger@gmail.com

**Looking to downsize for Retirement?** MHA (Methodist Homes for the Aged ) are opening Adlington House, Moorside Road, Urmston. There are 1, 2 and 3 bedroom Independent Living apartments, beautifully finished, with lovely communal lounges and a fine dining room. The apartments are for anyone over 60 yrs to buy, with a weekly service charge. You can then buy additional care as you need it. Glayne has been to look round and they are splendid! For further details or to arrange a visit contact [www.adlington.co.uk](http://www.adlington.co.uk) or 0161 747 8256

Many thanks  
Love from Glayne

### **Christmas Displays**

(Organised by the Activities and Events team)

This year we are creating a display in the Church of 18 posters each depicting various aspects of Christmas as suggested by each letter of the **word CHRISTMAS**.

We invited all the groups that meet in our building to take part and have had a **MAGNIFICENT RESPONSE AS USUAL**. Many thanks in advance to all those who have offered to take part.

We intend to put up the display on Dec 1st and hope you will all enjoy looking at them

### **Things in cupboards**

During recent tidying and rearrangement of cupboards in the Church, we came across a box containing a number of old books ranging from 1804 to 1875. John Ryland's Library was consulted and they through the Methodist Heritage Group have found homes for them. We have helped complete collections and filled gaps in their libraries. So if you want to see the books, their whereabouts are:-

New Room, Bristol  
Farrer's Life of Christ 1874

John Wesley's House and Museum of Methodism, London  
The Methodist Magazine

- 1816 vol 1

- 1818 vols 1 & 2
- 1819 vols 1 & 2
- 1821
- 1826

Bible inc Apocrypha with annotations publ Knot and Lloyd 1804

We still have left the Methodist Magazine

- 1809
- 1820 vols 1 & 2
- 1822

## **CHRISTMAS AND EASTER**

Rev Dr John Taylor

(John began his ordained ministry as a probationer in the Sheffield, Carver Street, Circuit before coming to Partington in the Sale Circuit. He served as President of the Methodist Conference in Britain in 1997/ 1998)

There is something fundamentally healthy about keeping together Christmas and Easter, the two foundational miracles on which the Christian Faith is built. We easily forget that they belong together and fail to appreciate the enormous claims that we are making at both of these seasons of the year. It is astounding that we should proclaim that the God who created everything that is became a small human baby like us. It is equally amazing that we should claim that God experienced within his own being what it is like to die a horrible, excruciating death on a Roman gibbet and that God raised Jesus from the dead. Both Christmas and Easter should assure us that the God who became man and died like a criminal on a Roman cross is still with us in our pain and suffering. God has been there, done that and has the T shirt!

So, in this season when we look forward to the coming of Jesus, let us this year look beyond his birth and the tinsel and the baubles on the Christmas tree to the way in which his relationship with the Father grew and developed over the years to the point where he was seized and given the shameful death of a criminal. Do not be afraid of speaking of 'the development' of Jesus. He was not 'all there' in the beginning in the cradle. He had to learn to walk, to speak and how to use the tools which his earthly father Joseph used in his work. His awareness of who he was and what his mission and destiny were to be, both were shaped in his communion with God the Father. Look beyond all of that to his resurrection and ascension and realise what an amazing God we worship who in Jesus his Son made a decisive intervention in human history to give us the ultimate revelation into what he is like. Both Christmas and Easter should be held together if we are to have the whole story.

### **God's Acres**

In the southeast corner of Highclere's acres lie seven Bronze Age tumuli. It is believed there were originally more – perhaps as many as twelve, remnants of a people who lived here around 4,500 years ago. Looking around at the landscape I can imagine them farming and hunting in this area, drawing up clean chalk water, storing foods for the winter, and collecting berries or nuts. Examination of DNA links these people to travellers and settlers from the Rhine area whose evolving use of metals such as copper and bronze led to the development of agriculture and settlements, ornaments and memorials and, of course, weapons. Above these tumuli lies Beacon Hill, an iron age hillfort within which you can see the embanked circular outlines of what might have been dwellings. It is a spectacular view back down the slope towards the Seven Barrows and other possible settlement enclosures marked today as low earthwork banks within the grassland. Moving forwards in time there are indications of Roman settlements around this area too, before they became absorbed as part of the kingdom of Wessex. Anglo Saxon communities and Viking incursions led to new settlements and perhaps new burial places. There is a truly beautiful glade where the land is

disturbed at the northern foot of the hill near where we have found a few Roman artefacts and hence signs of a settlement.

It is a beautiful part of England, good trees, good hunting, and light soils. Who knows how many people have lived here and buried their dead under these fields – they are indeed God’s acres. This is an Anglo-Saxon phrase literally meaning – God’s fields. The German phrase is the same, “Gottesacker” and standing looking at the landscape I wonder if we are losing our ancestral wisdom. The 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Carnarvon who discovered the tomb of Tutankhamun chose to be buried in the fort, to become a part of the history and be forever connected with the past. Henry Longfellow’s poem of the same name has always had a particular resonance for me. This is part of it:

“I like that ancient Saxon phrase, which calls The burial-ground God’s-Acre! It is just;  
It consecrates each grave within its walls,  
And breathes a benison o’er the sleeping dust.  
God’s-Acre! Yes, that blessed name imparts  
Comfort to those, who in the grave have sown  
The seed that they had garnered in their hearts,  
Their bread of life, alas! no more their own...  
...This is the field and Acre of our God,  
This is the place where human harvests grow”

Today we usually organise our dead in graveyards or crematoriums and thus separate our daily lives from them. In fact, in the middle of the Park here at Highclere there is a charming chapel, built by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Countess of Carnarvon after her husband’s death. It is there to offer comfort for all those who grieve with an annual service taking place each September to remember those we loved. Although we live apart from them, at specific times we can come together to pray with them. Perhaps there were also specific times that the settlers around Beacon Hill chose to sit and remember those they loved. At this time of year, with Autumn well underway, it is inevitable that our thoughts turn towards Remembrance on November 11th. The poppies, silence, respect, and prayers are to honour and to acknowledge our debt to the millions who died in the First World War and all subsequent wars. The past and present come together as we try to reassure ourselves that our memories will always bear witness: “They do not fade, they shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old.”” To that end, four years ago Highclere commemorated the beginning of the First World War and, in September 2018, we will again gather together to celebrate the beginning of the end, and the weeks grinding slowly towards peace. It is a weekend to understand, to engage, and to raise money for those who suffer in war zones today, from doctors to veterans, from those fleeing war to the soldiers’ families left bereft. My thought was that this is for those who serve but also for those who save.

On a practical note I know I need to bring visitors to Highclere so to make this weekend happen, I am turning to my aviation friends for planes old and new, to other friends for cars and for marching bands. The Castle operating theatre will return and there will be songs and lectures. What a weekend! In the end, looking after those who serve and those who save needs support, kind people and money.

Lady Carnarvon’s article from her blog

### **Save the date**

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> Sept 2018

Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> Sept 2018

### **Rainfall**

Helen and I read this in New Zealand at Harst where the average annual rainfall is 180 inches compared to our 34 inches. Let’s celebrate and praise God for what we have!

Colin

### **Rain**

It rained and rained and rained  
The average fall was well maintained;  
And when the tracks were simply bogs  
It started raining cats and dogs.  
After a drought of half an hour

We had a most refreshing shower;  
And then; most curious thing of all  
A gentle rain began to fall  
Next day but one was fairly dry  
Save for one deluge from the sky,  
Which wetted the party to the skin  
And then at last – the rain set in

*Anon*

### **Reminiscences on harvesting**

There have been many changes at harvest time since I left school at the age of fourteen to work on the family farm.

When harvesting in those days, a road was cut round the outside of the cornfield by scythe and the loose corn was gathered up by hand and tied into a sheaf by twisting 2 wisps of straw together to make a band. The sheaves were pushed firmly into the fence to leave a clear pathway for the horses and binder to follow.

The binder was pulled by 3 horses; 2 side by side with a chain horse in front. My job, after helping with cutting the road, was leading the chain horse by the head with my brother Denis on the binder working the levers. Round and round the field we went until the field was finished. Then we would help the rest of the gang setting up the corn into stooks (or rithers as they were called in this area) which would remain – according to tradition-while the church bells rang over them twice.

As soon as weather permitted the horses and carts would be led into the field and the sheaves loaded onto them and carted into the yard. My job, usually, was unloading the carts at the shed, pitching the sheaves onto the stack where a worker would pass them to my father who, often on his hands and knees, would press each sheaf into position making sure that they were in a straight line. He would go round in ever diminishing circles and then start again on the outside. The corn would remain here until threshing time.

This was a very busy occasion. The driver and his mate would come early to stoke up the boiler on the steam engine and grease the machine round and then at about quarter to eight would come into the house for an egg and bacon breakfast. Work would start at 8, o'clock and then the driver and his mate would come in for a midday meal. During the war with the coming of rationing this practice was stopped to the relief of the farmer's wife!

In the early days my job was carrying water for the steam engine. At one shed the water had to be carried out of a pond, up a steep slope which soon became muddy with the water slopping from the buckets. It was then poured into the tank. At the other shed the water was pumped from the well. Later, I was promoted to pitching the sheaves from the stack onto the threshing box. This was hard work, especially if there was a wind blowing-which always seemed to be blowing the sheaves back again.

Running the threshing operation took a minimum of 8 men. 2 or 3 on the stack, one feeding the machine, one attending to the corn, a chaff carrier and 2 men on the baler – as well as the driver who was in overall charge. The corn was weighed out-oats one and a half cwts and wheat two cwts in hessian sacks, tied up and trucked into a nearby shed where they remained until the corn merchant's wagon arrived. The corn was carried out by 2 men and lifted onto the wagon-no wonder farmers of my generation all had bad backs.

Nowadays at harvest time a few heads of grain are taken to the yard and the corn is tested by moisture meter. When the moisture content is satisfactory the combine goes into the field. There is no need to mow roads now as the combine can start by the hedge. The corn is handled in bulk from the combine, right through the store and into the merchant's wagons.

Compared with the gangs of the early days, now 2 men can do the harvesting on their own. There certainly has been many changes over the last 70 odd years.

John Priestner

### **Thank you**

Dear friends of the Avenue Methodist,

Can we just thank you all once again for supporting us with all your harvest collection. As always, it will be put to great use as we reach out to the less fortunate in our society. Also, we are humbled and shocked by your amazing gift of £280-80. This is a staggering amount and the timing is such a clear sign to us that God is still pleased with what we are doing. We have been praying so much to see God's financial provision and then to see a cheque come in like this just brings us to our knees. Thank you so very much for your constant support which keeps us going. Manchester is a very sad place, at this time, as we see such a big increase in those sleeping rough and those caught in addictive lifestyles. Our first port of call has always been to meet people where they are and to try and alleviate their suffering. The most effective way we can do this is by pointing them to Jesus, who alone can bring true freedom. Please continue to pray for us as we reach out with His love and compassion. Thank you all again so much for all you have provided.

Much love and thanks

Steve and Irene Brown

City Centre Ministries Manchester

If you would like to help this group further **at Christmas time**, please give your donations of chocolate, sweets, soap, socks, gloves, hats, etc to Valma. Cards with a short message are always appreciated. Thank you for your continued support especially as there are increasing numbers of homeless people in our city.

### **Smarties**

In the new year look out for your tube of Smarties! We will be giving everyone a tube of Smarties to eat for free. The catch is that we don't want you to throw the tube away.

We would like you to put spare 1p, 5p, 20p and even £1 coins into the tube over the following 3 months and then return your tube (hopefully full of money) to church at the end of March. All those little coins that you find down the side of chairs or settees, those little coins that are weighing heavily in your pockets and might make holes, please put them in your tube.

The money raised will go towards buying something specific for Breakfast Church and for Church- we haven't decided what yet but will let you know when we distribute the Smarties in January. For reference One Smartie tube full of 20p's holds about £12.

We hope you will join in the fun and let's see how much money we can raise.

### **McMillan coffee morning**

A big thank you to everyone who supported the coffee morning. Between us we raised £556.50

Jan Franks

### **Fruity thoughts !!**

Be a pineapple



Stand tall  
Wear a crown  
Be sweet on the inside

### **A HYMN FOR ADVENT**

Christ our Saviour came among us,  
Born a child in Bethlehem,  
Sent from Heaven by His Father,  
Reconciling God and man.

Through His Spirit we are strengthened,  
God is with us when we pray,  
Joyful people, moving forward,  
Full of hope for each new day.

At this Advent time, remember,  
Jesus said he'd soon return,  
Then to judge the nations' peoples,  
And to take His children home.

There are some who are in darkness,  
And the others are in light,  
And you see the ones in brightness,  
Those in darkness drop from sight.

God has promised to His servants,  
Everlasting, perfect light,  
Never overcome by darkness,  
Never banished from His sight.

Come again, Lord, in your glory,  
Fill us with your love and grace,  
Let us know we are forgiven,  
When we meet you face to face.

*Words: David Phillips*

Suggested Tune: Mack the Knife

### **A HYMN FOR ADVENT - Background**

For Christians, the season of Advent recognises the coming of Christ from three different perspectives: in the flesh as a child in Bethlehem, in our hearts daily, and in glory at the end of time.

The first two verses of my Advent hymn refer to God's Son coming into the world in human form as our Saviour and His continuing presence with us through the Holy Spirit. Later verses reflect our need to be alert to Jesus's Second Coming as judge.

I decided to set the hymn to the tune for the song known in English as Mack the Knife, which forms part of the music drama, *The Threepenny Opera*, written by Kurt Weill and Bertold Brecht and premiered in Berlin in 1928. This is a tune which I have long enjoyed and I felt could be a striking accompaniment to words for a hymn.

When I read about the drama, I found that though it is not overtly religious, its theme of the social injustice of inequality between rich and poor is one which many Methodists would identify with today. I was

particularly struck by the fact that the rarely heard final verse of the song describes the different lives of rich and poor using the imagery of light and darkness. That imagery is also much in evidence in the Bible which refers to Christ as the light of the world and to His followers as not walking in darkness. As we look forward hopefully in Advent to the Second Coming, we need with God's help to live as children of light - turning our backs on the darkness of sin - if we are to claim the ultimate prize of eternal life. I have therefore taken the liberty of including this particular verse as the fourth verse of my Advent hymn.

*David Phillips*

## THE ANNUNCIATION

*Rev John Taylor*

*(John began his ordained ministry as a probationer in the Sheffield, Carver Street, Circuit before coming to Partington in the Sale Circuit. He served as President of the Methodist Conference in Britain in 1997/ 1998)*

Like Ash Wednesday and Ascension Day, the Annunciation is an event in the calendar of the Church worldwide which we in the British Methodist Church almost totally ignore. It is given a brief mention alongside the Christmas story when reading Luke's account of the birth of Jesus (see Luke 1: 26-38) but is not noticed in the unfolding liturgy of the Christian year and celebrated on the 25th March annually as it is elsewhere.

The selection of the 25th March to mark the Annunciation, the announcement by the angel Gabriel to Mary that she would bear a son named Jesus, is as arbitrary as the selection of Christmas Day itself. We do not know specifically on which day of the year Jesus of Nazareth was born although our forebears in the Faith chose to celebrate his nativity to coincide with the pagan feast of Sol Invictus, the unconquered sun, which marked the time of the year when the Sun begins again to grow in strength and asserts its conquest of darkness. The proclamation of Jesus Christ as Light of the world made it easy to select the date of his birth as coinciding with the Roman feast celebrated at the darkest time of the year. The date of the announcement to Mary that she would bear a very special child is arrived at simply by counting back nine months from December 25th to March 25th.

The Annunciation has been picked out as important more by artists than by theologians. It has been painted many, many times and acquired in the process its only characteristic symbolism. For example, paintings of the Annunciation are full of angels, messengers from God, and usually include a lily as a sign of the purity of the maid who is the centre of the story. Her dress is blue which was the richest colour in the painter's palette and therefore reserved for this very special person. More often than not there is an open copy of the scriptures to demonstrate that what is happening is fulfilment of prophecy. However, to underline that the coming of the baby is the work of the Holy Spirit a dove hovers over Mary as a sign that the birth of this child has its origin in God. There is rich symbolism for us to ponder not only in December but also in March too.

## OUR OWN SPACE

*The other day I lifted a copy of John Stott's book "The Birds Our Teachers: Biblical lessons from a lifelong bird-watcher" from the bookshelf. It belonged to my late wife, Val. Out of the book fell a handwritten comment which she had written on one of the chapters. This is a not uncommon experience as there remain a number of her books which I consult only infrequently. The comment was written on the back of a hospital note of advice about yet another chemotherapy regimen which she was undergoing. Val continues to bless me! (Barry Myers)*

Robins are widely portrayed on Christmas cards. Smaller than a sparrow, legs thinner than matchsticks, they are very tame and confiding. My father often had a robin on his hand in the garden. Robins need space, as do most birds. They are territorial and can be very fierce in defending their territory.

There are good reasons for this. It makes it easier to get a mate and keep him or her; it ensures adequate food for their young; it spreads the population out; it permits them to raise more than one brood. Birds maintain invisible boundaries and chase off interlopers. Some maintain extensive boundaries – as much as an acre to 30 square miles for an eagle.

“I need space.” How often have we said this in response to pressures of various kinds? Pressures at work can make us feel an insignificant part of a large crowd, a small cog in a large wheel or part of a rat race. Even church work and Christian service can make us say, “Hang on a minute, I need some space. I need to be myself and make time to learn who I am.” There are reasons why teenagers sometimes pin a note on their bedroom doors requesting others to “keep out”!

Yet people are social creatures and need each other as well. Too much solitude is not good for us. We need each other more than we realise. Even so, we are also individuals and it’s not good to lose our identity in the crowd. We need space.

It’s a question of the right balance. That’s a Christian view as well as a common sense view. True human existence needs both space to express itself and a chance to join with others and share experiences.

Christians know that God’s intent for us is NOT to lose our created individuality but to retain it. Sometimes we do have a territory of our own, just like a robin, and feel we have to defend it.

The Christian life begins, however, when Christ stands at the door of our heart and knocks. He will not invade our space. Only when we open the door to admit him will he come in. I pray that we will let him in this Christmas. *Val Myers*

### **Toddlers**

If you are a new parent or grandparent you are very welcome to join this group on a Mon, Thurs or Friday morning from 9.45. If you would like to buy a ticket for the very popular Christmas parties at The Avenue, they will be on sale very soon. The parties are on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> Dec and Monday 18<sup>th</sup> Dec. Come and join in the fun and don’t forget there will be a visit from a very special guest who I have been told has a sack full of presents. There will be some special Christmas food items for children and adults together with Christmas crafts and songs.

### **Family news**

Congratulations to Christine and John on the birth of their granddaughter in October

### **Dates for your Diary**

Clothes collection; 20<sup>th</sup> October, This raised over £140 thank you

Monthly matinee Fri 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec Come and join in the Christmas festivities Avenue Methodist

Cantibus concert entitled “Christmas is coming” 9<sup>th</sup> Dec Avenue Methodist Church. Doors open at 6.45 for 7.30pm. Tickets £10. Children £4. Please see choir members for tickets or pay on the door. Come and join in an evening full of wonderful festive music, old favourites, spine tingling new arrangements and bell jingling fun

Nativity 17<sup>th</sup> Dec at The Avenue 10am

Carol Service 17<sup>th</sup> Dec at The Avenue 6pm

Christingle 24th Dec at The Avenue 3.30pm

Midnight service      24<sup>th</sup> Dec      at The Avenue      11.30pm

### **MWiB Gifts and Grants**

Every year MWiB gives gifts and grants to a wide range of projects both here in the UK and overseas, to encourage, enable and equip women in education and skills that will enrich their lives and the lives of their families and communities. Social and Community Action Grants These grants, totalling £6,000—£7,000, are for UK projects which meet a local social or community need. Priority is given to projects working with those considered marginalised in society, and to those seeking funding for imaginative new areas of work. While grants cannot be given for building projects, staffing costs, or ongoing expenses, in previous years gifts have been given to a wide variety of projects including parent and toddler groups and after-school clubs, community cafes and church lunch clubs, a community women's group, a befriending service, a community crèche, groups working with people with dementia, a gardening project for young people with challenging behaviours, and a group teaching basic cookery skills for cheap and nourishing meals. Applications for 2018 SCA Grants are now open; the closing date is 28 February 2018. Application forms are available to download from the website: [www.mwib.org.uk/aboutus/finance](http://www.mwib.org.uk/aboutus/finance), by email: [finance@mwib.org.uk](mailto:finance@mwib.org.uk) or by telephone: 0300 030 9873. Applications must have the recommendation of the District's MWiB Officers, and the applicants themselves must be committed financially or practically to the project.

### **Methodist women in Britain**

Exciting volunteer opportunities! We are currently inviting applications for the roles of MWiB President 2019–2021 a four year commitment beginning in June 2018 (one year as Vice-President, two years as President, and a further year as Vice-President). [Closing date for applications: 5th January 2018]

**The Avenue Methodist Church exists to worship God in a relevant way; deepen and strengthen our spiritual life; offer Christian salvation, fellowship and service within the wider community.**

**Minister: Rev Richard Mottershead. Tel: 07771 624885**  
**Church Office: Open 9.30—12.00 Monday to Friday. Tel: 973 1832**  
**Email: [avenuechurch1@btconnect.com](mailto:avenuechurch1@btconnect.com)**  
**Website: [avenuemethodistsale.org.uk](http://avenuemethodistsale.org.uk)**

**We extend a warm welcome to all who wish to worship God in this place. We are very pleased to welcome young children into worship. A small play area is available at the back of the church for use at any point if wished. Please ask any steward for information about facilities provided for young people, including the *Beginners* who meet every Sunday morning.**

**Family breakfast services at 9am on the first and the third Sunday in the month led by Nick and Dee**  
At breakfast church we offer an opportunity for people of all ages to reflect and respond, as we seek to hear from God and learn more about his love for us.

We are all on a journey so why not join us to Explore Together

***WORSHIP IN Dec/Jan Please see the Plan***

The deadline for submission of articles for the next issue of the Newsletter is 18<sup>th</sup> Jan