

# CONTACT

December 2017



Volume 59 - Issue 12  
Sawston Free Church – Little Abington URC – Castle Camps URC

**Sawston FC Regular Church Activities** but please check diary below for full details or contact the relevant group.

<b>Sunday</b>	Every Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of month  2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of month  3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of month 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of month 5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of month	10.30 am 3.00 pm  10.30 am 6.00 pm 6.00 pm 6.30 pm	Morning Worship Messy Church <b>No evening service</b> Holy Communion as part of Morning Worship Quiet Time with God Evening Communion Go4th Praise Service ( <b>No evening service</b>
Monday	Alternate - see diary	10.00 am	Craft Group
Tuesday	Term time only	6.15 – 9.00 pm	Boys' and Girls' Brigades
Wednesday	Fortnightly see diary	2.00 pm	Wednesday Fellowship
Thursday	Term time only	10.30 – noon	Time for Tots
Saturday	Last Saturday of month	10.30 am	Monthly Prayer Meeting
For further details of these activities, please contact one of the Elders (see back page). Four housegroups meet regularly. For information contact the Minister or Church Secretaries.			

### Three Churches Services and Dates for Your Diary

Date	Sawston	Lt Abington	Castle Camps
<b>Sun 3 Dec</b>	10.30am: Advent Sunday - Andy Nightingale 3pm: Messy Church	10.15am: Morning Worship - Rev Elizabeth Caswell	10.30am: Communion – Rev Bruce Waldron
Mon 4 Dec	10am: Craft Group (page 14 )		
Wed 6 Dec	2pm: Wednesday Fellowship (page 14)		
<b>Sun 10 Dec</b>	10.30am: Christingle Service - Rev Bruce Waldron 6.30pm: Carol Service at C Camps	10.15am: Morning Worship - Mrs Sarah Deveraux	10.30am: Morning Worship - Mr David Lloyd 6.30pm: Carol Service Hadstock Silver Band – Rev Bruce Waldron
Wed 13 Dec	2pm: Wednesday Fellowship (page 14)		
<b>Sun 17 Dec</b>	10.30am: Junior Church Nativity - Rev Bruce Waldron 6.00pm: Village Carols at SFC - Rev Alan Partridge and Rev Bruce Waldron	2.30pm: Communion - Rev Bruce Waldron	10.30am: Family Service - TBA
Mon 18 Dec	10am: Craft Group (page 14 )		
<b>Sun 24 Dec</b>	10.30am: Joint Service with Lt.Abington & Castle Camps - Rev Bruce Waldron		10.30am: Joint Service at SFC - Rev Bruce Waldron
<b>Mon 25 Dec</b>	<b>10.00am:</b> Christmas Day Service - Rev Bruce Waldron		10.00am: Members' Christmas Day Service
<b>Sun 31 Dec</b>	10.30am: Morning Service - Faith Paulding	10.15am: Morning Worship - Mrs Wendy Roe	10.00am: United Service, St Mary's Shudy Camps

This diary appears on the website. If you know of anything else you would like on the web diary, email: [contact@sawston.com](mailto:contact@sawston.com)

#### Rotas

	Car	Flowers		Car	Flowers
Dec 3 & 31	Tony Moss 834220		December 17	Gordon Heald 833983	Sylvia Goddard
December 10	John Conway 833953	Margaret Wilson	December 24	John Newton 562873	

The closing date for **January** Contact is **Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December.**

**David Nunn is the editor , so please email your items  
to [contact@sawston.com](mailto:contact@sawston.com) or [anne.nunn@btinternet.com](mailto:anne.nunn@btinternet.com)**

# Contact

The monthly magazine of  
**Sawston Free Church, Little Abington & Castle Camps URC's  
United Reformed – Methodist**

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## From the Minister's Desk Christmas is a time to honour the body.



When John wrote that God became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth, it would have been a shocking thing for anyone to say. But Christmas is about that.

The Incarnation, the centre of the Christmas message, affirms that God does not draw back from the material, from the physical. The Body is not “sinful flesh”. It is declared Holy, because God became a physical person, a baby, a boy, a man. The idea that still kicks around, that the spirit is holy but the body is somehow not, came out of pagan thought, pre-Jesus, not out of the Hebrew scriptures, although certainly it was adopted in some ascetic parts of the Jewish community. But that idea is not inherent in the Old Testament, and certainly not in the New. When St. Paul speaks about sinful flesh, he's not saying that flesh is sinful but that it has sinful expressions, and most of them are clearly references to the way Rome uses and abuses physicality. If you read his letters with that in mind, it makes a lot more sense than trying to read 19<sup>th</sup> Century Victorian attitudes into it.

Christians, above all people, are to be an example of St Paul's idea that Faith refers to in this in her article in this edition, that the body is sacred; it is to be respected, honoured and used for its proper purposes. It is all too easy to use it for improper purposes. A touch can be a caress - or a blow. Food can be nourishment - or abuse. A kiss can be a seal of commitment - or a betrayal; embrace can be comfort to another or unwanted self- serving gratification.

Christmas confronts us with a profound responsibility about the sacredness of the body, because God came among us in a human body, so declaring this fabric we inhabit to be sacred and hallowed. Part of our sacred task is to demonstrate that, to proclaim it in how we honour our bodies, and other people's bodies. So how do we do that?

One Way, of many, is to use it for blessing, of others and ourselves. It is not to be a means of self-gratification but a means of blessing. In the URC Daily Devotions, Andy Braunston suggests that our support of Food Banks and Charities is a form of emulating Jesus' washing of his disciple's feet. Jesus used his body to heal and teach, with touch, with gesture, even spit on one or two occasions. Another way is to honour all the different shapes our bodies take, to not collaborate with the media's fixation on some arbitrarily selected model but to celebrate the diversity of colour and size and gender and shape.

Yet again, keeping the body in “good shape” is a responsibility, as much as we can. My dad used to say that the life of a car is in the servicing. It's the same with our bodies. They need to be well cared for because they are God's instruments, and we are given stewardship. To use the words of the pop song, “Our life is for rent and nothing I have is truly mine!”

And one more very important point; God has made us to grow from birth to old age. We have a mandate to honour the human body throughout the life span. Rodney, one of the members of the Bungay church said to me once “The only crime you need to commit in some people's eyes, is to be young.” On the other hand, I have so often heard people speak to the elderly in patronizing tones, as to a child. Every part of our development towards the next part of this eternal journey is sacred and to be honoured. Wrinkles are not to be deplored. Most people have earned every one of them and we need to have a theology that blesses wrinkles too.

## STEWARDS OF GOD'S RESOURCES -Body

Stewardship is about the relationship between Christian living and Christian giving.

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*“Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you,  
whom you have from God, and you are not your own?  
Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit.”*

*1 Corinthians 6:19-20*

*God gives us such intricate and wonderful bodies of such variety*

*Our response is to treat them with respect, care for them, and use them wisely.*

I remember clearly the first time that I saw a dead human body. I was twelve years old. It was my grandmother. I was confused. I was confused as to why my father and aunt were so upset over the remains of what was, clearly not, the grandmother that I had known and loved. The sense that the mortal body we use during our lifespan in the physical world is no more than a shell or an 'overcoat' has never left me through the many many dead bodies that I have witnessed during years working in hospital and since.

The body is a part of the person, but not all of a person. Of that I have a deep visceral and spiritual certainty. The body is, however, an intriguing miracle of creation and evolution. My mother, who worked as a District Midwife in the 1950s, has often said that if you doubt the existence of miracles then witness human birth; it is a miracle that happens repeatedly, thousands of times every day across the planet.

The human body allows us to exist in and interact with the physical world. Whether it is merely a vehicle for our journey across the years from birth to death or a nursery in which our spirituality can be cultivated and nurtured (or indeed diminished and destroyed by the brokenness of the world) is a matter of perspective and faith. Either way the answer will not be revealed in fullness in our own personal lifetimes.

The body does, as we know, go wrong at times. It can be damaged and its functionality compromised by disease, mechanical failure, trauma, chemical imbalance, infection and so forth. During my first week in the wards as a student nurse we had two patients admitted overnight. They were both male, both the same age and both with the same medical condition. As they had been emergency admissions they had come with no personal possessions and so had been given the obligatory hospital pyjamas. They were in neighbouring beds; both sported impressive beards above their pale blue strip pyjama jackets. They were, for all intents and purposes, identical. One was a Roman Catholic priest and the other a local down-and-out from what was affectionately known as 'Itchy-coo Park'. Disease does not differentiate between bodies according to class or means and God does not differentiate according to our physical identity either. There is no too tall, too short, too fat, too thin, too hirsute, too plain, too anything in God's mind. God sees the identity beyond the physical and loves all of his children equally. He challenges us to do the same.

How we use our bodies and our accompanying physical skills for the work of God's Kingdom on earth is an ongoing part of the discipleship journey. However, the way that we treat our bodies and how we respond to the way that others treat theirs does not seem to have such a high agenda. The theology of stewardship encourages us to reflect on how we balance caring for the gift of physicality without making an idol of it and how we respond in a Christ-like way to such issues as self-harm, the ever-expanding plastic surgery market that strives for (supposed) perfection, eating disorders, alcoholism, drug addiction, body modifications and so much more.

One very important aspect of the physical body is that it is through our physicality that we can have relationships with others. Our ability to speak, hear, feel, taste and smell allows us to interact with the world and with other people. As we approach Christmas we are reminded that it is through the miracle of the incarnation, God made-known through the flesh of Jesus Christ, that we are drawn into personal relationship with that transcendental existence and identity that is so much vaster and profounder than physicality alone.

***Faith Paulding***

## Message From Castle Camps



The end of the year is approaching and we are all having thoughts about Christmas and the New Year ahead.

Our new hymn books have arrived and are in use in the chapel. The Audio system has been overhauled and it is now much better.

On 10<sup>th</sup> November, all of Castle Camps Primary School pupils came to the chapel for a Remembrance Service, including the two minutes silence at 11am. It was a very moving service and the staff and pupils are to be congratulated.

We had a good response to the request for Samaritan's Purse Boxes and we should like to thank everyone for participating.

On 1<sup>st</sup> December, Castle Camps Primary School is having an Advent Service at 2pm in the chapel and it will be led by Rev. Ian Fisher and Rev. Bruce Waldron. We are looking forward to having them with us as we enjoyed their visit last year. They will have squash and biscuits at the end of the service.

After the success of our Christmas Tree Festival in 2016, we are having it again this year. The chapel will be open on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December from 11am to 3pm. If you are wishing to take part, please bring your display on this day. We are looking forward to some very original ideas. The chapel will be open on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> for morning service and in the evening for the Carol concert, time for viewing, as well as the morning service on the following Sunday.

On Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December, the Morning service will be led by Mr. David Lloyd. This will be the first time that he has visited us and we are looking forward to meeting him.

Later the same day, it is our Carol Concert at 6.30pm, led by Rev. Bruce Waldron with the Hadstock Silver Band, followed by coffee and mince pies. The offertory from this service will be for the Arthur Rank House.

On Christmas Eve, we are joining Sawston for the morning service.

On Christmas Day, we shall have a Members' Service at the earlier time of 10am. The offertory for this service will also be for the Arthur Rank House.

As the year is ending, we should like to thank all of the preachers who have taken our services and especially to Bruce for all of his help and support. Also, thank you to all of our friends and helpers, who have always been willing to help us over the year. A special thank you to Keith for playing the organ.

We hope you will be able to join us to celebrate the birth of Christ at our Christmas services.

We send our best wishes and God's blessing to you all.

**Mary and Friends.**

## HOW TO SPEND A DECEMBER DAY

*First published in 2009 but slightly modified*

The weather is miserable and damp and it is often foggy at this time of year.  
The best way to cheer myself up is to COOK!

I have just spiced some vinegar for pickling the red cabbage, and prepared the beetroot for chutney. The kitchen smells nice but the vinegar makes me cough.  
The cabbage is a beautiful colour lying in the bowl and I am moving on to cake making next. I love this job and as there are no grandchildren around I get to lick the bowl myself. I prefer that Robert does not catch me at it but as I have explained to him many times you need to work at it if you want a figure like mine.

This is a dangerous time of year for me as I am not to be trusted in the same house as marzipan and I am about to make some. I shall try and get it onto the cake quickly so that I don't succumb to temptation.

Many people celebrate an early 'mini Christmas' this time of the year as they try to see family members that cannot be together on Christmas Day. The tree will be decorated early and the youngsters will be getting really excited. My son's wife has family in Australia and I cannot imagine Christmas Day on the beach at the hottest time of year for them.

Well I hope you and your families have a very happy Christmas time wherever you may be.  
The coming year sounds as though it may be hard for many but as we know and believe *All Will Be Well*

Valerie Spencer

### Message From Lt Abington



December 4<sup>th</sup> is the Birthday of David Rose.  
David is the lynch-pin of our fellowship and undertakes many tasks for the benefit of us and God's Church here in Lt Abington. We pray for God's blessing on him and strength for each day.



**"We wish all our friends in the group a blessed Christmas" Lynne Riecansky**

*Come and see!*

The light of God has come into our world  
To proclaim God's justice and love;  
It has overcome the darkness and brought new life.

*Come and follow!*

Christ our companion has redeemed our world  
He draws us into a loving family  
From every tribe and family and culture.

*Go and tell!*

The Spirit has equipped us for service  
To love our neighbours as we do ourselves  
To bring God's salvation to the ends of the earth.

*Come and see, come and follow, go and tell!*

In God's Love the nations of the earth will put their hope.

**Adapted from a prayer by Christine Sine on Godspace**



Mary, did you know  
that your Baby Boy would one day walk on water?  
Mary, did you know  
that your Baby Boy would save our sons and  
daughters?  
Did you know  
that your Baby Boy has come to make you new?  
This Child that you delivered will soon deliver you.

Mary, did you know  
that your Baby Boy will give sight to a blind man?  
Mary, did you know  
that your Baby Boy will calm the storm with His  
hand?  
Did you know  
that your Baby Boy has walked where angels trod?  
When you kiss your little Baby you kissed the face  
of God?

Mary did you know..

The blind will see.  
The deaf will hear.  
The dead will live again.  
The lame will leap.  
The dumb will speak  
The praises of The Lamb.

Mary, did you know  
that your Baby Boy is Lord of all creation?  
Mary, did you know  
that your Baby Boy would one day rule the nations?  
Did you know  
that your Baby Boy is heaven's perfect Lamb?  
The sleeping Child you're holding is the Great,  
I Am.

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## TWO LITTLE BOYS

A couple had two little boys, ages 8 and 10, who were excessively mischievous. The two were always getting into trouble and their parents could be assured that if any mischief occurred in their town their two young sons were in some way involved.

The parents were at their wits end as to what to do about their sons' behavior. The mother had heard that a clergyman in town had been successful in disciplining children in the past, so she asked her husband if he thought they should send the boys to speak with the clergyman.

The husband said, 'We might as well. We need to do something before I really lose my temper!' The clergyman agreed to speak with the boys, but asked to see them individually. The 8 year old went to meet with him first. The clergyman sat the boy down and asked him sternly, 'Where is God?'

The boy made no response, so the clergyman repeated the question in an even sterner tone, 'Where is God?' Again the boy made no attempt to answer. So the clergyman raised his voice even more and shook his finger in the boy's face, 'WHERE IS GOD?' At that the boy bolted from the room and ran directly home, slamming himself in the closet. His older brother followed him into the closet and asked what had happened. The younger brother replied, 'We are in BIG trouble this time. God is missing and they think we did it.'



## Prayer Diary for December

### STEWARDS OF GOD'S RESOURCES. THE BODY

**December 1-2.** Would you pray for the Australian churches please. Recently the Australian government held a plebiscite to ask people for their opinions on same-sex marriages. The plebiscite engendered strong and often ungracious debate, some strong abuse and a lot of hate tweets. Many people felt very unsafe. Others felt caught in the crossfire. For many churches it was a difficult time, with faithful and committed Christians struggling to understand each other's opinions. The church leaders have urged people, above all, to respect each other as servants of Christ, and to honour all people as worthy of the love of God, and therefore, the love of Christians, to reject polarities, and listen with compassion and grace to each other. We all need to hear that message, but your prayers for the Australian church are requested.

*(The result of the poll was announced on the 15<sup>th</sup> November: a 60% majority in favour of same-sex marriage)*

**Advent 1: Week of Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December to Saturday 9<sup>th</sup>.**

**WE ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST. HIS SPIRIT IS WITH US.**

- **On Sunday morning** Andy Nightingale will be leading worship at Sawston and in the afternoon the Messy Church team will be doing Messy Christmas. Please hold them in your prayers. In Castle Camps, Bruce will be leading Communion and in Little Abington Liz Casswell will be drawing them into Advent. We pray for each other as we enter Advent.
- Wednesday Fellowship will be celebrating their year with a final Christmas Party and
- On Friday night, Christians Together in Sawston will be singing Christmas Carols at our Sawston Late Night Shopping event. Our church will be holding a stall nearby to sell Christmas decorations. Both will be a gentle way of saying that Christmas is about the birth of Jesus.
- Joseph and Mary are preparing to travel to Bethlehem. It is winter. The nights are getting colder. As we enter into Advent, please remember the ever increasing number of homeless people suffering in the first winter blasts, and the escalating number of people dependent on Food Banks for the bare essentials.
- For many this will not be a time of shopping for Christmas presents but of struggling to meet the higher fuel costs, if they have a home.
- Pray for those who are so poor they do not feel they can come into a church to celebrate Christmas

**Advent 2: Week of Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December to Saturday 16<sup>th</sup>**

**IF THE EAR WERE TO SAY, 'BECAUSE I AM NOT AN EYE,  
I DO NOT BELONG TO THE BODY',  
THAT WOULD NOT MAKE IT ANY LESS A PART OF THE BODY.**

- **On Sunday** morning, Sarah Devereux will be leading worship at Little Abington, Sawston will be led by Bruce in their Christingle Service, Castle Camps will be having a members run Carol service in the morning and in the evening. Sawston have cancelled their normal evening service to go and join with Lt. Abington and Castle Camps for a Village Carol Service at the URC with Hadstock Silver Band. We pray for each other as we worship together.

- **On Tuesday and Wednesday night**, Christians from the villages will be gathering at the URC in Castle Camps on Tuesday to go out carolling in Castle Camps and then at Shudy Camps Church to do the same in that village on Wednesday night. Leaflets about the services in both URC and Parish churches have gone out to all the houses in the villages, encouraging people to come and give thanks to God: The Lord is coming. Hallelujah.
- **On Wednesday**, Wednesday Fellowship will be holding their annual Carol Service and during the week, Christmas Assemblies will be happening with Icknield and Bellbird Schools. Please pray for the teachers as they wind up the year, and for Revs Bruce and Alan as they try to help the children understand what this time of the year means.

### **Advent 3: Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December to Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup>.**

#### **DO YOU NOT KNOW THAT YOUR BODY IS A TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WITHIN YOU**

- **On Sunday**, Castle Camps members will be holding a Family Service and Sawston will be led by the Junior Church in a nativity; Little Abington will be sharing Communion in the afternoon at 2.30pm. In the evening, at Sawston, people will gather around for a quiet and reflective Communion.
- **On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings**, Christians will gather at St. Mary's Church to go carolling, taking the message of Christmas in song to the streets of Sawston.
- We hold in our prayers the people who have been bereaved through this year, who will be feeling acutely the loss of loved ones.
- We hold in our prayers those who have been shattered by family violence, by family breakdown. For many, Christmas is a poignant reminder of absence.
- We hold in our prayers those who are struggling with mental illness or physical illness at this time when so many seem to be celebrating. May our compassion be even stronger at this time of year.

### **Advent 4 and Christmas**

#### **THE WORD BECAME FLESH AND LIVED AMONG US**

- **Christ has come among us, a light shining in the darkness, the Prince of Peace into our troubled world, the King of Kings, laid in a manger, born into threat and intrigue, but also born into a place provided by a stranger, worshipped and adored by shepherds and angels.**
- **Thanks be to God for this Christmas time.** Hope is our prayer for God is with us. Joy to the world, the Lord is come; let earth receive her King. Let every heart prepare him room and heaven and angels sing. Hallelujah. Christ is born.
- **We pray for peace on earth and goodwill to all peoples.**
- **We pray for the end to injustice that leads to war, for the end to prejudice that leads to hatred, for the end to destruction of our world and its resources. May god's will be done on earth as it is in heaven.**

### **1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Christmas.**

#### **AND WE HAVE SEEN HIS GLORY, THE GLORY AS OF A FATHER'S ONLY SON, FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH**

- **On Sunday**, Faith Paulding leads worship at Sawston, Castle Camps share in a Covenant Service with the Parish Church led by the Rev. Ian Fisher, and Lt. Abington will share with each other the beginning of their Christmas year. As we embark upon another year of seeking to serve Christ, may we walk His way, be His mission, and live His life in our communities and families. We pray in Christ's name. Amen



Arthur Rank Hospice Charity

*making every moment count*

## Arthur Rank Hospice's Christmas tree returns bigger than ever! Could you help?

The Hospice fundraising team are looking for volunteers to help with their annual Christmas tree recycling scheme! It's a fantastically simple idea....

Anyone who lives in postcode areas CB1, CB2, CB22, CB3, CB4, CB5 - and now also CB24 - and doesn't want the hassle of getting rid of their tree, can register online at [arhc.org.uk/treerecycling](http://arhc.org.uk/treerecycling) to have it collected by the Hospice's Christmas-Tree-clearance-team! For a small donation, as little as £5, they will collect your tree to be composted.



Last New Year £7,000 was raised in this way for the Hospice and this year they are hoping to raise even more!

### Can you help? Support is needed in a number of ways:

1/ Could you help with promoting the collection by leafleting in the postcode areas listed above between 27 December and 4 January?

2/ Would you like to join the Christmas-Tree-clearance-team? It's like a treasure hunt for trees, so lots of fun (and for a really good cause!) on 5 and 6 January (either day, or both). If you additionally have access to a van, that would be fantastic, but co-pilots are also needed for the day.

3/ If you live in one of the postcodes above and would like your tree collected for a small donation on 5 or 6 January, please register your tree by visiting : [arhc.org.uk/treerecycling](http://arhc.org.uk/treerecycling)

To help as a volunteer please contact [bec.beattie@arhc.org.uk](mailto:bec.beattie@arhc.org.uk) / 01223 675888. You can also contact her to find out more about what is involved at any stage of the scheme and/or if you're interested in offering sponsorship in some way.

**Very best wishes**

Bec Beattie

Community Fundraiser 01223 675885 / 07787 835158

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# Christmas Thoughts

*An Article from Contact December 1964*

Christmas is a wonderful time. First and foremost, we remember a young Jewish 'mother-to-be' riding on an ass, a kind and concerned husband seeking somewhere for her to rest and make ready for her now urgent need, the giving birth to 'The Saviour of Mankind'.

From early childhood we cherish the story - we feel sad at the answer 'No room. No room'. Still we feel the wonder of the nativity, the ox, the ass, the shepherds and the kings. Never will we tire of the story - the birth of Christ, the beginning of it all.

This story lingers long in my mind, then again other stories run through my mind like tinsel through the branches of a Christmas tree, half true, half legend, passed on from distant shadowy figures in the past.

There was a story an old relative told me, of dear sweet Piccola, the little girl whose widowed mother told her not to put her shoe out for St. Nicholas to fill, as he just couldn't come to her, they were terribly poor. All they had in the house was a small amount of bread and milk. The child's faith was so great that she insisted on putting out her shoe for St. Nicholas and it was the mother who went to bed heavy hearted and in tears.

Next morning when the little girl awoke, she dashed out to see what was left for her by St. Nicholas and there in the little shoe was a half starved little bird sheltering from the bitter wind. The child's delight knew no bounds. St. Nicholas could never have left her a better gift, a real live living thing to keep her company, something she could love and care for, something to share her small meal of bread and milk.

Probably you know a more accurate version of this story but every Christmas I listen enchanted to this story with tears very close. It still has its appeal to every child I tell it to.

Then again, I think of the story of the big 'crammer' which my naughty big sister regularly told me at Christmas, of how she, on Christmas Eve, determined to keep awake to see if Father Christmas really did come down the chimney.

Just as she was dozing off to sleep she heard an awful scraping noise. Heavens, was that really the old fellow coming down the chimney? She sat bolt upright in bed and sure enough, sticking out of the fireplace was a big black boot, and that's as much as would come out, the poor old chap was stuck fast in the little bedroom fireplace. He could get neither backward or forward. Well, this was a problem. If the old boy knew she was awake it was coal for her in her stocking, if he stayed stuck in the chimney it would be empty stockings for the rest of the children.

So she called, 'Hold on there, I'll lend a hand.' She heaved and heaved and bang, Father Christmas, with hat askew, covered in soot and perspiring heavily, landed with a bang on the bedroom floor. She dressed his bumps and bruises and helped him up. He didn't tell her off for being awake and as she had rescued him from the chimney she didn't get any coal in her stocking.

Do you know, I believed every word of it for ages!

I'd better stop here for I've already gone from the sublime to the ridiculous, but these are just some of the things I think of at Christmas.

***Mrs G Reynolds***

I hate war, but I am no pacifist. I attended the War Memorial ceremony. I think it right to honour not just those named on our war memorial but also those millions whose names are not on our or anyone else's memorial. It delights me that (I would judge) ten percent of the village closes the road each year. I think it good to pray with the village for peace. I am grateful to everyone who makes the occasion possible. What follows is, I hope, couched in my usual carefully nuanced and diplomatic fashion: Sorry, but that hymn is counter-Christian and truly hideous. It should go.

***I vow to thee my country, all earthly things above.*** Of course I don't! Some things matter so much more than one's country. For example: all those young men whose names we honoured and their comrades - they really *do* matter. As do countless Germans, French, Italians, Russians, Japanese, and so on. Where were they in our Memorial remembrances? Not a word. That, in my view, is a serious mistake. God affords England/Britain/UK no favoured-nation status.

***Entire, and whole and perfect:*** Really? This is near-blasphemous, blind, soppy romanticism. King Arthur and all that. Ours is a fairer and more just country than most, and I would rather live here than anywhere in the world, but that is a long way from its being 'entire, and whole and perfect'.

***The love that asks no questions:*** Love that asks no questions collaborates in abuse of every kind. Such love deliberately shuts its eyes to all manner of evil. Such love is not Christian love. The love of God, the gospels say, shines light into every dark corner and sets people free. It questions everything. It doesn't shut its eyes whilst millions go to their death as pawns in powerful people's games either in the Somme or in Yemen or Syria or anywhere else in God's world.

***[The love] that lays upon the altar the dearest and the best.*** This nonsense is born of that horrible theology that says that God dreamed up the Crucifixion and gladly donated his only Son as a price worth paying. Does God think that *all* parents should (like God) cheerily regard their children's murder a price worth paying in the name of love? Can you believe that? I can't.

Hideous theology leads to a hideous world. What we sing matters.

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On 28th October, Revd Dan Woodhouse (Methodist) and Sam Walton (Quaker) were tried at Burnley Magistrates Court, for attempting to disarm Typhoon fighter jets at BAE Systems' site in Warton, Lancashire. These jets were being serviced as ground attack aircraft prior to being delivered to Saudi Arabia for use in the Yemen, where the civilian losses at the hands of the Saudis have been described as genocide. Woodhouse's and Walton's defence was that under British law one may use minimum force in the defence of an innocent third party. They were acquitted. Some papers carried the story [1]. I am proud that my sister (another Quaker, nearly half a century older than Dan and Sam) was there in court for them. I am ashamed of those Methodists who would put Dan on a disciplinary charge for bringing Methodism into disrepute. We should all be proud of Dan and Sam. Dan's is a love that asks important questions. Unlike most generals, he carries the cost himself. The Christian church so needs people who have the courage not only to believe things, but to do things, and personally to bear the cost.

-----  
At the end of our service at the Memorial we prayed: God our Father, we pledge ourselves to serve *you and all your peoples in the cause of peace, for the relief of want and suffering, and for the praise of your name.* Now that really *is* a Christian prayer. That, it seems to me, is worth standing freezing with the rest of village, and praying. I shall go next year, God willing, and pray.

[1] <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/saudi-arabia-yemen-fighter-jets-bae-systems-acquitted-criminal-damage-this-week-a8022861.html>

**Editors Note: Mike is often thought provoking...let me know your thoughts**

**Remembrance Sunday Service  
At Sawston Memorial - 12th November 2017.**



**At Imperial War Museum Duxford.  
Parade led by 1st Sawston Brigades Band.**



## Piero

I have recently received the following letter from Piero our sponsored child from Peru.

Dear Sponsor

I want to tell you that I am very happy to greet you.

I am in the third grade of elementary school in the classroom 'A'. I attend mornings. My school is called 'Maria Prado de Bellido' and it is in the back of the study centre.

On 28th July my dear Peru celebrated the Independence Day. My family and I visited a place called 'Monsefu' which is an hour away from 'Chiclayo', the place where I live. We had a nice evening with my family. How are you and your family?

Please pray for my grandfather.

Hugs. Piero

PS I like painting, read stories and playing.

I have a little dog and like to feed him, take him for a walk, give him a bath and play with him.

I have written a reply and said we will pray for his whole family and especially his grandfather. So I hope everyone will support me in this.

**Rosemary Harriss**



## Quiet Time

The pastor prayed eloquently,

'Father, we thank You for moments of quietness.'

Forgive my ignorance, Lord, but what and when is *quietness*?

Oh, of course. It's the time the organ plays softly and people cough and babies fuss.

No? It's probably when the washing machine finally stops and the television is silenced.

No? Maybe it's when I sleep and only the quiet noise of dreams scamper across my mind.

No again? Then it must be when I'm alone in the hills with only the chirp of birds and rustle of wind.

'No, my child, it's when you are alone with Me in the middle of life's raucous disorder.'

*Susan Lenzkes © 2017*

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## So what happens at Time for Tots, then?



**As a toddler:** you step into our large, warm church with your carer. While you're being signed in, you choose an activity straight away - perhaps dressing up, jigsaw, construction kit, looking at books, practising going up and down stairs, peeping behind the Cross. Soon it's time to gather on the story blanket for a lively Bible story, songs and nursery rhymes, and be shown the craft activity. Then you move to sit at a chair and table to do the craft, before snack time. Feeling re-energised, you ride or push a larger toy or two, have a go at a sensory activity, or continue playing. As soon as you hear a song on the loudspeaker, you know it's time to help pack away and put things ready to go in the Toy Cupboard. If there's time you might dance to the music or practise running up and down in the big space. If you're a young baby, you might sleep throughout.

**As a carer:** you know you are coming to a safe place with your child, or children. You are warmly welcomed, and have a chance to meet new people, especially if you've just moved to the area, or left work. You know your buggy is safe as it's with you in the church (on a protective sheeting, of course.) You appreciate someone else making you a hot drink, and chatting with other adults. You haven't had to think how to occupy your children this morning. No one is going to try to sell you anything, and you can enjoy watching your child play independently.

**As a volunteer:** you come in by 9.30 to help make the area safe for inquisitive children, and set up activities. You appreciate the prayer and coffee before the session opens at 10.30. You know you are a valued part of the team, whether you're keeping the register, preparing the snacks, serving the hot drinks, telling the story or leading the singing. Behind the scenes, church people have prepared the themes and the craft materials, and bought supplies. You enjoy enabling children to play and adults to talk as you try to show and share God's Love during the morning. Once the session has closed, you'll be stacking the toy cupboard, cleaning and storing the protective sheeting, or vacuuming the church carpet, closing the partition doors and making the building ready for other users. You go home shattered, knowing that 35 or so children (and their carers) have had an active, enjoyable morning and your time and energy have been worthwhile.

If you'd like to know more, please have a word with Rosemary Heald

[timefortots@sawstonfreechurch.org](mailto:timefortots@sawstonfreechurch.org) .

This group is led by members of this church community, which has supported the food collection for JHC at Harvest, and the Shoebox Appeal, as well as contributing costs to the church. We value your support.

***Rosemary Heald***

## Trivia Facts About Christmas

- \* **Speedy Santa** - US scientists calculated that Santa would have to visit 822 homes a second to deliver all the world's presents on Christmas Eve, travelling at 650 miles a second.
- \* **Robins** - Robins on cards were a joke 150 years ago when postmen wore red tunics and were named after them.
- \* **Mince Pies** - Although now mostly vegetarian, in Victorian times, mince pies were made with beef and spices.
- \* **Tangerines** - The tradition of putting tangerines in stockings comes from 12th-century French nuns who left socks full of fruit, nuts and tangerines at the houses of the poor.
- \* **Wassailing**- Carols began as an old English custom called wassailing, toasting neighbours to a long life.
- \* **Carols** - Carols weren't sung in churches until they were introduced by St Francis of Assisi in the 13th century.
- \* **Stockings** - Hanging stockings out comes from the Dutch custom of leaving shoes packed with food for St Nicholas's donkeys. He would leave small gifts in return.
- \* **Turkey** - Before turkey, the traditional Christmas meal in England was a pig's head and mustard.
- \* **Christmas Pudding** - Christmas pudding was originally a soup made with raisins and wine.

# Sawston Free Church

## Craft Group

We meet in the back hall of the Church on alternate Monday mornings between 10am and 12 noon. Everyone is very welcome, bring your own project of knitting, sewing or crochet or you can just drop in for a coffee and a chat.



**Dates for December:** 4<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>.

For more information please contact **Yvonne** (01223) 473937 or **Pam** 834220

=====

## Wednesday Fellowship

We meet alternate Wednesdays from 2 – 4 pm in Sawston Free Church.

The meeting always commences with a Bible reading and prayers, followed by any notices.

New members are always very welcome both young and old. Please come along and join us for a cup of tea and friendly chat.

### The program for December

6<sup>th</sup> December - Christmas tea party

13<sup>th</sup> December - Carol service -members and non members all welcome, cup of tea and mince pies

Please contact **Janet Parr** for more information: 832840

=====

## Time For Tots at Sawston Free Church

Showing and Sharing God's love

Time for Tots is a church run group for babies and preschool children and their carers. During our weekly session there is time to play, make things, chat, have a drink and snack, have a bible story and sing some songs.

We meet on Thursday mornings between 10.30 and 12noon during term time. For more information please contact **Rosemary**. Email: [timefortots@sawstonfreechurch.org.uk](mailto:timefortots@sawstonfreechurch.org.uk)

Another baby and toddler group you could go along to is Refresh - 2.pm-4pm every Monday (except bank holidays) in St Mary's Church. This is a 'drop in' session with refreshments and CAKE!

For more information please contact **Becca**. Email: [rebecca.r.herrick@gmail.com](mailto:rebecca.r.herrick@gmail.com)

=====

## Flower Rota

I should like to thank everyone who has generously donated towards our having flowers in church each Sunday and I am sure that they are enjoyed by everyone.



The new flower rota will be in the church after Christmas and we hope lots of additional names can be added for 2018. Let's make sure that there are flowers every week.

**Janet Parr**

=====

## Fund Raising Activities

At the next Sawston Winter Fair, we are hoping to have a table selling lots of different crafts.

We need anything crafty - jams, chutney, home made items etc.

This craft stall will be in addition to the stall with the free mulled wine and mince pies.

The proceeds will go to Church Funds since they are in great need of a boost.

Please contact Pauline Purdy if you are able to help or have any suggestions, Many thanks,

**Pauline**



## CAMBRIDGE METHODIST Diary December 2017 (not available at time of print)

### Church Directory

<b>Minister</b>		<b>Tel</b>
Rev. Bruce Waldron	The Manse, 3 High Street, Sawston Email: revbruce@sawstonfreechurch.org.uk	836786 07814 920187
<b>Secretaries:</b>		
Maggie Jones - Sawston	21 Hillside, Sawston	565637
Lynne Riecanisky – Lt. Abington	7 Meadow Walk, Great Abington	893295
Val Spencer – Castle Camps	20 South Road, Abington	892214
<b>Elders: Sawston</b>		
Mary Simuyandi	28 New Road, Sawston	837433
Anne Nunn	10 London Road, Sawston	832913
Susan Nunn	55 Granta Road, Sawston	561956
Faith Paulding	Charlbury, 26 Moorfield Road, Duxford	574325
Mike Purdy	42 Granta Road, Sawston	830903
Sue Sisk	63 Babraham Road, Sawston	833508
Sue Lelliott	26 Park Road, Sawston	520383
Chris Sales	2 Edinburgh Avenue, Sawston	473829
<b>Joint Treasurers:</b>		
Lynne Hays	Baggot Hall, Station Road, Harston	871800
Terry Penny	April Lodge, 81 Brewery Road, Pampisford	833635
<b>Contact Editors</b>		
David & Anne Nunn	10 London Road, Sawston Email: anne.nunn@btinternet.com	832913
<b>Church Website:</b> <a href="http://www.sawstonfreechurch.org.uk/">www.sawstonfreechurch.org.uk/</a>		
<b>Facebook page:</b> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/SawstonFreeChurch">www.facebook.com/SawstonFreeChurch</a>		



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- A quiet space for spiritual reflection & prayer?

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or contact Min Ong: [minhuey.ong@papworthtrust.org.uk](mailto:minhuey.ong@papworthtrust.org.uk)

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[contact@sawstonfreechurch.org.uk](mailto:contact@sawstonfreechurch.org.uk)

## Sharn Waldron

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