



## *Issue 60 December 2025 & January 2026*

*Loving Heavenly Father*

*Mary could not have known  
What she was saying yes to:  
We pray for her trust*

*Joseph could not have known  
Where his trust was leading him:  
We pray for his patience.*

*The Wise Men could not have known  
The end of their journey:  
We pray for their boldness and  
adventure.*

*The Shepherds could not have known  
The meaning of their vision:  
We pray for open minds.*

*The Christ child could not have known  
What was happening to him.*

*We join with him  
In his fragile humanity  
In bringing before the unknown of  
divinity*

*Our prayers, praise and Wonder this  
Christmas time.  
Amen.*

*A prayer from The Book of a  
Thousand Prayers  
Written by Peter Armstrong*

*Our mission statement: We are called to be a growing, inclusive, evangelistic and justice-seeking Church*

A prayer for our church in 2025

Dear God of mission

Who alone brings growth to your church

send your Holy Spirit to give

Vision to our planning

And power to our witness.

Help our church grow in numbers

In spiritual Commitment to you,

And service to our local community,

Through Jesus Christ our Lord

Amen

© Leading your church into growth.

# Reflection

December 2025 / January 2026

This December, and possibly beyond, our Zoom Bible Book Club are going to be considering some reflections of a book by Paula Gooder called, *Women of the Nativity*. Paula has written meditations from the perspective of 9 women connected with the wider story of Advent and Christmas. Using Advent themes of Patriarchs and Prophets, Paula considers the lives of some of the Old Testament women – Sarah and Huldah. There are reflections on some of the obvious women of the Christmas narrative – Mary and Elizabeth. Then there are some created characters whose stories are not told or whose names are not known in the Bible but who could have been present – Abigail whose husband was also serving in the Temple when Zechariah had his encounter with Gabriel; Shiphrah whose stable Mary and Joseph used, and who was present to help with the birth of Jesus.

In a world often dominated by men, and by the powerful, it is an important reminder of the women who have been present throughout the story of salvation, and especially the story of God's coming among us in the birth of Jesus. People who have often been written out, whose names and stories we now have to invent, but whose real names and stories are known by God, whose parts in God's story continue to be remembered by God.

As we gear up for Christmas celebrations and the beginning of a new calendar year with all that might hold, some of us may feel as though the part we play in God's story in this community is recorded by others. As both our congregations celebrate 125<sup>th</sup> anniversaries I am reminded that so often part of the telling of the church's story is reciting the list of names of ministers.

However, this Advent, Christmas, and New Year, may we be reminded that all of us play an important part in God's ongoing story of salvation in our community – by the way we speak to others, the acts of kindness we show, our works for justice and mercy for those who rarely experience either, our joining our voices with our brothers and sisters in worship of the God who delights in us all. Even if our names or stories are not recorded in the history books for future generations, know that our names and stories are always treasured by God.

So, as we journey through this holy time, seek to play your part in God's story of salvation here where you are.

May you know the peace and hope Christ this season.

*Will*

# Updates from home

We have recently returned from one of our long trips abroad and this time the destination was South America. This was a wonderful trip and include here are some of the highlights in a brief summary.

## **Ecuador**

We started our tour in Quito, the capital of Ecuador which stands at over 9,300ft above sea level. We stayed in the older part of the city which has many interesting historical buildings, mostly from the time the country was a Spanish colony. Here is a picture of one



of the many Churches. After our brief stay in Quito, we travelled to the Ecuadorian part of the Amazon rainforest. To get there involved a short flight, a 2-hour ride on a fast motorboat and then a further 1 and a half hours on a paddled canoe. The location however was worth it as the lodges we stayed in were set on the edge of a beautiful lagoon. The next two days were spent exploring parts of the jungle either in a canoe or on foot. In that time, we were lucky enough to see some wonderful wildlife.



## **Peru**

After returning to Quito, we flew down to Cusco in Peru, another high city standing at over 11,000ft above sea level. We both had to adjust to the altitude but neither of us suffered any actual sickness. Again, we stayed in the older part of the city. This city was the Inca capital and would have had many splendid examples of Inca architecture had the Spanish not destroyed most of them. However, it was still impressive and an enjoyable place to visit. Cusco is the base to visit Machu Pichu and we travelled to Aguas Caliente (the town at the base of Machu Pichu) by train.





for our visit. We were lucky with the weather and so saw it at its best. We also returned to Cusco by train with fantastic scenery to enjoy on the journey.

Our next destination in Peru was Lake Titicaca.

To get there we took another train journey, this time it took ten and a half hours and

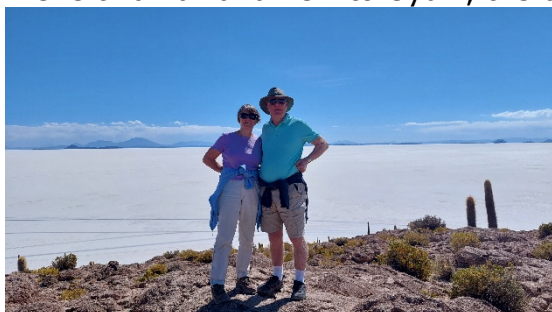
travelled over a pass in the Andes. Taking us to a height of over 13,000ft. before descending to Puno (the main town at the northern end of the lake). Lake Titicaca is the highest navigable lake in the world at 12,500ft above sea level and covers an area of over 3,200 sq miles. The most interesting aspect of the northern end of the lake are the floating islands that are created and lived on by indigenous peoples.



After our stay in Puno we started a long days journey down to La Paz. We had a private transfer to Copacabana (a town on the border with Bolivia). Here we had a catamaran tour out to Sun island and I had an opportunity to try some kayaking on the lake. After that tour we had a further long drive to get us to La Paz.

## **Bolivia**

La Paz is the highest administrative capital in the world at almost 12,000ft above sea level. We had little time to explore the city as we were needing to catch up with our laundry. The public transport however was interesting as it consisted of a network of cable cars! We left La Paz and flew to Uyuni, the base for exploring the salt flats.



The salt flats are truly spectacular covering an area of over 4,000sq miles. This picture is of us on a small rocky "island" in the middle of the flats. On our second day at Uyuni we were taken into the mountains surrounding the flats to see some traditional towns and lakes.

## **Argentina**

We left Bolivia on a long but spectacular car journey to get us to the northern Argentinian town of Purmamarca. This was just an overnight stop before we carried on the next day to Salta. This city has some very fine Spanish colonial architecture including the cathedral.





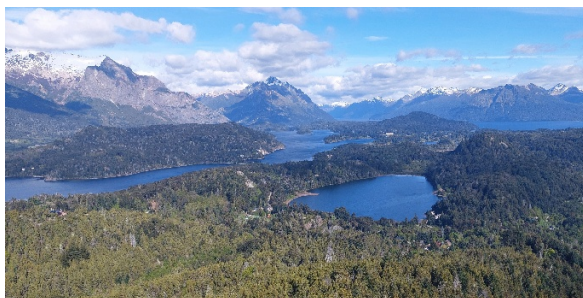
We left Salta to visit a town called Cafayate. This town is the centre for the highest vineyards in Argentina but is lovely in its own right. We were shown some of the vineyards and were able to sample some of the locally produced wines. They were quite different but also delicious.

We returned to Salta for our flight out to Iguazu. We were lucky enough to have a tour of both the Argentinian side and

the Brazilian side of the falls.



After our visits to the spectacular waterfalls at Iguazu we flew into Buenos Aires, the capital of Argentina. We had a tour of the city and with a lot of walking saw most of the important sights of this very large city. We left the city to take a flight to the Patagonia region of Argentina. We wanted to visit two particular areas, the first being the Perito Merino glacier near the town of El Calafate and the second being the lakes and mountains near Bariloche.



After leaving Bariloche we returned to Buenos Aires before taking a ferry to our final country Uruguay.

### **Uruguay**

The ferry ride from Buenos Aires is very short and brings you to a town called Colonia del Sacramento in Uruguay. The old part of this town is lovely with its origins going back to when the Portuguese owned the area. After a couple of days we transferred to Montevideo, the capital of Uruguay and a very important port. We enjoyed a tour of the city and a visit to a local winery to sample some locally produced wines. We left Montevideo by ferry to return to Buenos Aires for one last night before making the long journey home.

This was a marvellous trip and one we will not forget. Blessings Chris and Caroline

## A Mystery Cruise

We recently embarked on a 5 day Mystery Cruise. You might think it strange that we had no idea where we were going, but we really did not.

We embarked at Portsmouth, and later that evening set sail for who knows where? Many passengers were following the ships course on various phone apps to try and determine our first port of call. We had an idea that it might be Zeebrugge, and next morning, yes, we had guessed correctly,

It was possible to book optional trips without knowing where they were going, but some of the descriptions gave up clues. However, we were just going to disembark and please ourselves. We boarded the shuttle bus and went to Blankenberge, which is the beach area adjacent to Zeebrugge. Other passengers went to Bruges and beyond. The weather was glorious, and we had a lovely time.

The next day we were at sea, with the guessing game starting again, as to the next port of call. We awoke next morning to a grey, misty, drizzly day in Hamburg. By this time many passengers had plotted the ships course correctly. The weather

somewhat spoiled seeing the beauty of the city, We again opted to do our own thing, disembarking, and staying in the vicinity of the port, as this was very convenient for the city. Two of our companions walked to Miniature Wunderland, which houses the worlds largest model railway. They reported back that it was wonderful, but very crowded, and well worth the visit. Other passengers did an optional scenic coach excursion but couldn't see much! However we had an enjoyable day and made the best of it. We left Hamburg that evening, sailing back down the River Elbe in darkness, as indeed we had arrived.

Thereafter there was another sea day and on the fifth morning we docked back in Portsmouth, after a lovely trip with good company.

We cruised on Borealis, (1000 passengers), which is one of the Fred Olsen ships. This was a first time for us with this cruise line, and we were impressed. The ship was comfortable, décor classy, food good, cabins excellent, and entertainment varied. There was an amazing clock which spans three decks and forms the center piece of the atrium. It shows time zones from around the world on all four sides.

What was not to like? The whole cruise was enjoyable, and a very pleasant short break.

Wendy and Clive Hooper.





# Girls Brigade



## 4<sup>th</sup> Burgess Hill Girls' Brigade – Church Newsletter December 2025-January 2026

I am greatly encouraged that our numbers now stand at 24, this means we can do so much more with the girls and play a team games. – always difficult with just a few girls!

A highlight earlier in the year was for Rev Will Fletcher to present Jessica Payne with her Endurance Award after her extended time away from GB having open heart surgery and recovery time. I am pleased to say that Jessica is able to attend most GB evenings now.

Completed badgework this term: Explorers: **Helpful People:** Juniors: **Caring:** and Seniors: **World Need** which Molly Slater (Brigader) led and this enabled her to gain the final two points required to complete the work required for her Brigader Brooch.

After my visit To The Gattons School, we have gained five new Explorers and these girls will be enrolled at the Alternative Worship afternoon on 11 January at 4.30 pm together with Molly's presentation to her of her Brigader Brooch and Certificate.

We supported the Link to Hope Shoebox Appeal again this year. A big thank you to all those who gave me items for the shoeboxes which enabled us to take 13 boxes to their depot at Ferring last month. Next year we are thinking of supporting the Ukraine charity that BHMC is involved with.

This half-term, Valerie Randell has been rehearsing the Explorers in a Nativity Play which will be performed to the parents on Wednesday 10 December and Ellie Scott has been demonstrating to the older girls Christmas Cookery, making Peppermint Creams, Melting Snowman biscuits, Chocolate Chip Rock Cakes, Decorating Gingerbread Men and, to come, Mince Pies and Cornflake Christmas Wreaths. To end the term we will be holding our Christmas Party on 17 December.

My thanks, as always, to Ellie, Valerie, Amorette and Molly for leading the girls in the various activities and to the parents who bring the girls so regularly each week.

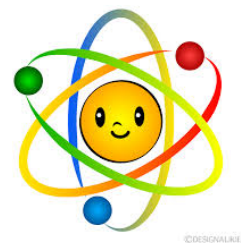
Margaret Taylor ~ Captain ~ 4th Burgess Hill Girls' Brigade - December 2025



# Funny Christmas Quiz!

Here is a funny quiz with answers, to give us a giggle at this time of year. Merry Christmas everyone!

1. What has a heart that doesn't beat?  
An artichoke
2. What did the ocean say to the beach?  
Nothing it just waved.
3. Why don't skeletons fight each other?  
They don't have the guts
4. Why did the Scarecrow win an award?  
Because he was outstanding in his field.
5. How do you organise a space party?  
You planet
6. What do you call a fish wearing a crown?  
King fish
7. Why don't scientists trust atoms?  
Because they make everything up
8. What do you call a bear with no teeth?  
A gummy bear
9. Why did the bicycle fall over?  
Because it was Two tired
10. What did the grape do when it was stepped on?  
Let out a little wine.



# Quiz!

As this newsletter covers both December and January I have done 2 quizzes for you.

Here is the Serious one. Good luck hope you enjoy it.

1. Who was the first president of the USA?
2. In what year did the UK join the EEC (now the EU)
3. Which planet is nearest the sun?
4. What was the name of the space mission that landed men on the moon?
5. Who sang the hit song "Can't help falling in love "
6. Which iconic movie starring Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman was released in 1942?
7. What international organisation was founded in 1945 to maintain world peace?
8. Who was the British monarch during the 1950s?
9. Who invented the Polio vaccine in the 1950s?
10. What toy was invented in the 1950s and quickly became a popular craze and is even popular now.?

ANSWERS ELSEWHERE IN NEWSLETTER.



# Fun facts and Feats

## FIVE FUN FACTS AND FEATS FROM THE GUINNESS BOOK OF WORLD RECORDS 2026

### Longest career as a TV presenter?

Goes of course to David Attenborough who started his career in 1953 working for the BBC on Animal disguises. He is still presenting in 2025.

### Largest Environmental Award

Is the Earthshot Prize which has awarded £20 million to 20 projects seeking meaningful solutions to the world's many environmental problems.

### Longest serving president

Is Theodora Oblang Nguema Mbasogo of equatorial New Guinea  
Both current and longest serving president of 42 years

### Sausages

from the UK Gavin Reynold filled, encased and twisted together 90 bangers, using a sausage machine on a TV show in Milan Italy on 3rd February 2025.

This surpassed Gavins own record of 83 set in 2024.

### Wing Walker

Aged 95 years and 138 days John Symmonds from UK. Performed a wing walk above Cirencester, Gloucestershire . On June 20th 2023. To raise money for Thames Hospice in which his wife Anne died.





# Church News

Unfortunately, the war in Ukraine continues and is getting worse. The people over there are running out of food. If you can help us fill the box in the welcome area with non-perishable items, Heather our contact would be very grateful, they are trying to do 2 drop offs a month at the moment.

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## Christmas

From 1st DECEMBER

Bring your Christmas Card for your church friends and pin it up on our notice board.

Make a small donation to All We Can.

SUNDAY 14th DECEMBER

4:30 pm will be our Carols by candlelight service. Followed by toasted crumpets and homemade mince pies.

WEDNESDAY 24th December

4pm our Christingle service. This is a lovely service and a great way to get into the Christmas spirit. No refreshments so you can go straight home and get the turkey prepared!!!

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The Festive Funday raised a magnificent totally of £359, thank you to all who helped and those who came and supported this important outreach day.

## Website and Email address

**The church now has a website!**

**[www.burgesshillmethodists.co.uk](http://www.burgesshillmethodists.co.uk)**

We thought it was about time that we had a website – especially as if you googled ‘churches Burgess Hill’ we were not listed at all! So the next time you lose your service dates in the newsletter, or you want to show someone a picture of the church, you can look it all up on the website.

We have also taken steps to improve our email security – we do sincerely apologise for the random emails you received when our email address was hacked. They are now much more secure, but you will notice a slight difference in the email address which is now:

**bhmethodists@gmail.com** (not Talktalk.net). Please save the new email address.

If you do accidentally email the old talktalk email then don't worry, it will be forwarded to the new email address (but we will close the account in a few months time).

### Quiz ANSWERS

- 1 George Washington
- 2 1973
- 3 Mercury
4. Appllo
5. Elvis Presley
6. Casablanca
- 7 The United Nations
8. Queen Elizabeth 2nd
9. Dr Jonas Salk
- 10 the Hula Hoop

# Christmas Greetings

*Happy Christmas and a healthy 2026 to all at Burgess Hill  
Methodist church*

*Thank you all for your support during 2025  
I am certainly looking forward to 2026 with you all  
All God's Blessings from KAREN xxxx*

Daphne Quelch would like you to know she is very happy at Oaklodge nursing home.

She is looking forward to the Christmas Party which is always good. Daphne wishes you all a very happy Christmas and a peaceful new year.

David Kennard

Wishes everyone a happy Christmas.

He is keeping well and says All the best for the new year.

Unfortunately he now does very little driving.

*Ruth Cartwright*

*Would like you all to know she is keeping well.*

*She will be spending Christmas for the last time in Plumpton as Denise hopes to be moving to Lewes in the new year. Ruth sends her best  
Wishes to all her friends in Burgess Hill.*

*Merry Christmas and happy new year.*

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Thank you to everyone who has supplied items for the newsletter, and putting up with my and Mums demands for articles and help with the Quiz!

All Gods blessings

Lorna



## **December 2025 Diary Service Dates**

### **Sunday Morning Worship we welcome you to join us on**

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December – Sunday Worship led by Mr Ian Srodzinski from 10.30am

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December – Carol Service led by Rev Will Fletcher from 4.30pm

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December – Holy Communion led by Rev Will Fletcher from 10.30am

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> December – Christingle Service led by Rev Will Fletcher from 4pm

Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> December – No service at Burgess Hill Methodist Church

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> December – No service at Burgess Hill Methodist Church

### **Sunday Evening Worship on Zoom**

Every Sunday evening, we join our friends from CSUA for an evening time of Worship held online from 6pm, unless otherwise stated.

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December** – led by Rev Barbara Evans – Routley

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December** – led by Rev Sheila Foreman

**Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December** – led by Rev Barbara Evans – Routley Carol service

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> December** – No service

Every 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday in the month – midweek communion from 12.15pm all are welcome in the back hall at BHMC

Every Wednesday morning from 10.30am we join our friends from Haywards Heath for Bible Book Club. Refer to the weekly church notices for more detail for both online services.

All are welcome to join us for any of the online sessions, please ask Rev Will for the access details. Contact details are 01444 215652 or Will Fletcher [will.fletcher@methodist.org.uk](mailto:will.fletcher@methodist.org.uk).

## **January 2026 Diary Service Dates**

### **Sunday Morning Worship we welcome you to join us**

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> January** – Sunday Worship led by Rev Will Fletcher from 10.30am

**Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> January** – Sunday Worship led by Rev Will Fletcher from 4.30pm

**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> January** – Covenant Service to include Holy Communion led by Rev Will Fletcher from 10.30am

**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> January** – Sunday Worship led by Rev Stuart Dyer from 10.30am

### **Sunday Evening Worship on Zoom**

Every Sunday evening, we join our friends from CSUA for an evening time of Worship held online from 6pm, unless otherwise stated.

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> January – led by Rev Barbara Evans – Routley to include Holy Communion and Covenant

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> January – led by Deacon Vicky Welsh

Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> January – led by Rev Barbara Evans - Routley

Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> January – led by Rev Andy Melvin

Every Tuesday evening, we join with our friends from Haywards Heath for evening prayers from 8pm online.

Every Wednesday morning from 10.30am we join our friends from Haywards Heath for Bible Book Club. Refer to the weekly church notices for more detail for both online services.

All are welcome to join us for any of the online sessions, please ask Rev Will for the access details. Contact details are 01444 215652 or Will Fletcher [will.fletcher@methodist.org.uk](mailto:will.fletcher@methodist.org.uk).

Every 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday in the month – midweek communion from 12.15pm all are welcome in the back hall at BHMC

We love to have your input items for the newsletter. Please send your items for inclusion in the February Newsletter to [bhmcnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:bhmcnewsletter@gmail.com) before the deadline of Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2026