**Christmas 2013**

Dear Friends

As a keen cyclist I’m fed up with potholes!  Each time I swerve to avoid one I’m reminded of words by poet Oliver Goldsmith “Life is a journey that must be travelled no-matter how bad the roads.”

In the coming days we begin the road that leads to Bethlehem. It is not an easy journey because of many distractions not least the emphasis placed on celebration and gifts.  Whilst these matter their presence can out-shadow the manger at Bethlehem and the wonder of Immanuel: God with us.  The Bethlehem journey is one we should never take with complacency, no-matter how many Christmases we have seen, for it demands concentration and commitment.  There needs to be a freshness and vitality in what we prepare to celebrate.  Christmas certainly is not simply for children. Yes we are challenged to have a childlike wonder at the God who stoops to earth in human form, and who drew and still draws millions around the globe to realise the truth of God’s eternal love and his grace to humanity.  Yet we are challenged with our intellect to reflect on the enormity of this.

What saddens me is how people almost stall at the manger, and do not go further.  It is as though what happens in the stable is the culmination of the Christian faith, rather than the beginning.  A while back I visited Coventry Cathedral and picked up a copy of the famous words, *One Solitary life.*  For me this is the essence of Christmas, for it takes us beyond the stable to a hill outside a city wall.

*He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another obscure village, where He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty. Then for three years He was an itinerant preacher.*

*He never had a family or owned a home. He never set foot inside a big city. He never travelled two hundred miles from the place He was born. He never wrote a book, or held an office. He did none of the things that usually accompany greatness.*

*While He was still a young man, the tide of popular opinion turned against Him. His friends deserted Him. He was turned over to His enemies, and went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While He was dying, His executioners gambled for the only piece of property He had --- His coat.*

*When He was dead, He was taken down and laid in a borrowed grave.*

*Nineteen centuries have come and gone, and today He is the central figure for much of the human race. All the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that ever sailed, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as this "One Solitary Life."* *Alt. Dr James Allan Francis*

May we each know the blessing of the love of God this Christmas and throughout 2014.

David Coppard

 **ADVENT CONCERT** ![C:\Users\Joan and Evan\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\RC8KCGWD\MC900435424[1].wmf]()

 **Sat 7th December**

 at 5pm

![C:\Users\Joan and Evan\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\EJWABO5K\MC900432403[1].wmf]()The Choir will be singing

 **"A-BUSTLE IN BETHLEHEM"**

 a Christmas Musical written by Heather.

A chance to sing & hear your favourite carols.

**Refreshments will be served
Please come along & bring your friends**

 **Donations to the RWANDA EDUCATION PROJECT**

**~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~**

**Saturday 14th December**

**10.30 a.m.**

**Join Churches Together in Warminster**

**For**

**![C:\Users\Joan and Evan\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\EJWABO5K\MC900140953[1].wmf]()**

**CAROLS IN THE MALL**

**Followed at 12 noon by the Salvation Army**

**CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT**

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**Sunday 15th December**

**at 3.30pm**

**followed by tea & mince pies**

**Offering for EMBRACE the Middle East**

Babies in the land of Christ’s birth are going without vital medicines and nutrition; babies like Bayan, one of triplets in a poor family in Gaza. His mother suffered malnutrition during her pregnancy and Bayan has been anaemic throughout his short life. Thanks to an Embrace- supported Well-Baby clinic in the family’s community he and his family have received the medication and support they need and he is well on the way to a full recovery.

Embrace is helping to give babies like Bayan a healthy start in life. Just £6.60 provides one anaemic child with essential medicine and nutritional supplements. Please spare what you can afford to make a huge difference to the lives of these babies and toddlers whose health is suffering because they have been born into Gaza’s bleak situation.

Carols by Candlelight

This year at the Carol Service the Choir will be singing David Coppard's favourite; "God rest ye merry, gentlemen", a carol we sing without a real understanding of its meaning. The sense is all down to that useful little punctuation mark, the comma. If the comma appeared after the word 'you' - "God rest you, merry gentlemen "- we might be correct in thinking that the Carol is asking God to give merry gentlemen a rest. But the correct place for the comma is after the word 'merry': "God rest you merry, gentlemen"

'Rest you merry' is an old English phrase. 400 years ago it would have been a common blessing. The words remind us of an old-fashioned Christmas - Carol singers tramping through the snow carolling this old and well-loved message to the gentlemen of the house in return for free ale! The ladies being busy in the kitchen preparing the food for the festival of Christmas .

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**CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE**

**9.30 a.m**

**Led by Rev David Coppard**

**We will be joined by our friends from the Baptist Church**

**COLLECTION TO BE SHARED BETWEEN SHELTER AND THE PHILLIPINES APPEAIL**

**Services for December to February.**

 **10.30a.m unless otherwise stated**

**DECEMBER**

**1st : John Saunders**

**8th : Rev David Coppard**

**15th : Isabel Smears**

**3.30 p.m. Rev David Coppard & Rev Heather Morgan CAROL SERVICE**

**22nd : Eric Clifford**

**29th : Rev David Coppard ALL AGE WORSHIP**

**JANUARY**

**5th : Douglas Colbourne**

**12th : Janet Ruddick**

**19th: Rev David Coppard**

 **COVENANT SERVICE & HOLY COMMUNION**

**26th : Rev Mary Teed**

**FEBRUARY**

**2nd : Geraldine Mann**

**9th : Tom Hill**

**16th : Rev David Coppard HOLY COMMUNION**

**23rd : Local arrangements**

**Feb 16th will be a special service for all members & friends of the Church – watch out for details.**

**SATURDAY CHARITY COFFEE MORNINGS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **January 11th** |  |
| **February 8th** | **Foodbank** |
| **March 8th** | **People Against Poverty** |
| **April 12th** |  |
| **May 10th** | **Christian Aid** |
| **June 14th** |  |
| **July 12th** |  |
| **August 9th** | **Action for Children** |
| **September 13th** | **Rwanda Education Project** |
| **October 11th** | **Zimbabwe victim support** |
| **November 8th** | **Shoeboxes** |
| **December 13th** | **Wessex Heartbeat** |

**If you would like to nominate/organise a coffee morning for your chosen charity then please put the details on the list in the foyer or if you are new to this and need advice then please speak to me.**

**AT THE TIME OF WRITING THERE IS NO CHARITY NOMINATED FOR JANUARY. IS THERE SOMEONE WHO WOULD LIKE TO FILL THIS DATE PLEASE?**

**Joan Jones**

**WEEKLY POP-IN-FOR COFFEE SESSIONS – At the last church meeting it was decided to again open the church on Saturday mornings so people can call in for a cup of coffee and a chat. David Morgan is organising this.**

**Sewing Group**

![C:\Users\Joan and Evan\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\CWHMKESD\MC900357337[1].wmf]()**Our membership is around 16 to 18 at present and at our fortnightly meetings there are generally around 12. We have a variety of crafts undertaken with quite a few knitters, very talented cross stitchers and gifts for new grandchildren, beautiful beading and cake decorations.**

 **Quilts for the Linus project have been completed, which involves making small quilts for premature babies or those needing long term hospital care, some of whom are terminally ill. At Christmas time we usually have a tea at Crockerton Garden Centre which makes an enjoyable end to the year, with invitations to our Christmas services.**

** The History of Christianity in Warminster**

On 23rd January at 2pm in St Georges Church Christians from around the town are invited to bring display pieces, photos and stories so we can collect the history of our churches ready for display in 2014.

**Youth In Warminster**

**Breakout** is a Youth activity that has been going for 2 years now. At the moment Christ Church , Baptist Church and FCF are involved. Future plans are to have more churches involved by supporting youth events or keeping young people apprised of Breakout and its club nights and special events like Christmas and Easter activities in the town.

Breakout has Five Teams**:**

1.Community team helping in people’s homes and gardens, litter picking in town;

2.Town Centre team creating a good atmosphere;

3.Henford House team investing in relationships with the residents,

4.Sports team running activities for youngsters;

5.Arts Team to produce art around the community

Are you interested in supporting young people in their Christian journey? Contact Christ Church’s youth worker, Chris Scorah to find out more.

**Ecumenical Lent Meetings 2014**

Ivy House will again be running an ecumenical bible study on Sunday evenings in Lent. Details will be confirmed in February

**Christian Aid**

Katrina Musgrave, Christian Aid rep from Bristol came to the Churches Together meeting to talk about the problems for door to door collectors. Fewer people from the churches want to collect door to door, fewer streets are being covered, more people in the houses do not want to respond financially or positively. Is there a more effective way of collecting than door to door?

Katrina explained that £75million is collected in Christian Aid Week and most of that is from door-to-door collectors. Warminster residents regularly, year on year, give between £5,000 and £6,000.

Can we raise the profile of Christian Aid and the Thirst for Justice in 11th to 17th May 2014?

Ideas for 2014 include a dinner on 6th June at the Civic Centre – look out for details.

The Minister Church will hold an ecumenical celebration for Christian Aid work and workers.

Katrina is available to in-put to events, to collectors, to groups to help encourage people in their collecting in 2014. Is there anything we would like her to do in United Church? Contact Karen Woollard if you have any ideas.

**Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Dates for 2014**

This wonderful week of prayer gives us all the opportunity to visit one another’s churches and also to meet other Christians in the town. The dates all include a simple lunch and a hot drink. Choose a church you have never visited or go and meet Christian friends.

|  |
| --- |
| Sunday 19 January The Minster 3pm Joint Ecumenical ServiceEveryone is invited.  |
| Monday 20 January Christ Church 12noon + lunch  |
| Tuesday 21 January Baptist Church, North Row 12 noon + lunch  |
| Wednesday 22 January St Johns C of E Boreham Road 12 noon + lunch  |
| Thursday 23 January St Georges Boreham Road 12 noon + lunch (followed at 2pm by meeting about Christianity in Warminster Exhibition for 2014) |
| Friday 24 January Foundation Christian Fellowship, Grace Centre, Woodcock Road 12 noon + lunch |
| Saturday 25 January United Church 12 noon-in the foyer lunch after our coffee drop-in  |

**Supporting Our Muslim Brothers and Sisters in the Town**

There has been a long discussion in Warminster Churches Together on recognising the difficulties for Muslim families when our newspapers and televisions are accenting terrorist campaigns and war. The United Church has offered to host an open meeting and to invite a local Muslim cleric to talk about the needs of Muslim parents and children in our town and how we can be supportive. The date will be set in the new year. If you have any comments please speak to David Coppard, John Alpin or Karen Woollard.

 For you diary

Quiet Day at Ivy House,

Warminster

**Monday 17 March 2014** from 10.00 to 3.30

 £12.00 per head – subsidised by Wiltshire Churches Together

 (contact Liz Overthrow )

IF YOU FIND THE PRINT TOO SMALL IN THE NEWSLETTER LET ME KNOW AND I WILL DO YOU A LARGE PRINT COPY

*Editor ... Joan Jones*

**CHURCHES TOGETHER IN ENGLAND ELECTS ITS FIRST BLACK PENTECOSTAL PRESIDENT**

History was made on Monday 7 October 2013 at the Annual National Church Leaders Meeting, held at Lambeth Palace, when Jamaican born Bishop Eric Brown was installed as the first Pentecostal President of Churches Together in England (CTE). The Revd Brown is the Presiding Bishop of the New Testament Church of God, a black majority Pentecostal church celebrating its 60th anniversary in the UK since being planted here by Caribbean migrants during the 1950s.

CTE Presidents provide spiritual leadership to the national ecumenical movement that facilitates closer working together by the churches in England. Bishop Brown’s appointment brings the total number of CTE presidents to six. He joins existing presidents, Archbishop Vincent Nichols, Archbishop Justin Welby, Bishop Jana Jeruma-Grinberga and the Revd Michael Heaney.

Commenting on his appointment Bishop Brown said, 'Service in the Kingdom of God at any level is the greatest privilege. I am delighted that I have been elected to serve as a CTE President and take this opportunity to say thanks for this expression of confidence’.

**BIG FARM DAY OUT AT SALISBURY**

Salisbury Churches Together recently held ‘The Big Farm Day Out’ at Riverbourne Community Farm in Salisbury, where over 1,200 people took part.

Churches provided stalls similar to a Village Fete experience: a family-friendly attraction (skittle alley, face painting etc), together with a display of their activities, focussing especially on their work with local people and groups. Each church offered private prayer opportunities.

An ecumenically-staffed prayer stand operated throughout the day. Short periods of worship occurred every hour or so, and the event closed with an hour long youth event with story-telling, song and praise. St Thomas's Choir and the Salvation Army Band performed throughout the event. At five o'clock there was all age worship with Christian Clown Roly Bain, and St Paul's Church, Salisbury, provided worship songs.

The feedback from churches was very positive, with every church reporting significant interest in their work in the community and even some deeper enquiries into Christianity and its relevance to the modern world.

**ECUMENICAL MISSION FUND GETS UP AND RUNNING**

**Churches Together groups in the county have responded with creativity to the challenge of finding new and exciting projects to be funded by the Ecumenical Mission Fund.**

**Out of seven applications received since its launch in July, one was the Big Farm Day Out (see above); another was an Away Day to review the groups priorities and find a vision; yet another was a course for young people in personal relationships.**

**Over £1,000 has been provided in grants to enable and encourage ecumenical activities in mission and outreach. The projects are evaluated on their effectiveness for Mission and Evangelism using the Five Marks of Mission which are:**

**1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom**

**2. To teach, baptize and nurture new believers.**

**3. To respond to human need by loving service.**

**4. To seek to transform unjust structures of society.**

**5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.**

**What’s your project?**

**For an application form please email the secretary on liz.overthrow@btinternet.com www.wiltshirechurches.net**

The leaders of Wiltshire Churches Together **meet twice a year to discuss shared life and work across the county. At their most recent meeting they began to consider what would be needed to enable closer working between the denominations and were able to draw on the experience of other parts of the country where there has been significant progress.**

**LOVE TAKES US INTO POLITICS**

**The Bishop of Salisbury, the Rt Revd Nicholas Holtam, opened the “*More Than Food? - expressing compassion, expecting justice”* conference in October with the challenge that Love takes us into politics. The Bishop was addressing an audience of representatives from churches across the six South West Dioceses who had gathered to discuss responses to the current food poverty crisis which is affecting many households in Britain. The growth in food banks in our churches is an expression of compassion but we need to ask how questions of justice and policy can be addressed. The Bishop reminded everyone that Scripture makes clear the Christian duty is to care for the vulnerable. Churches, rooted in every community and independent of public money, have a uniquely rich perspective to understand problems and speak out on them.**

**Bishop Holtam went on to say “The care of those in need is a striking characteristic of Christianity. The stories of Matthew 25 and of God’s judgement are the basis of our welcoming the stranger, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and the person in prison they are an impetus to gratuitous pastoral care. This is not about care of the deserving poor. “Love is about the care of individuals but it is also about the care of society. Love distributed is about justice and inevitably takes us into the are**a **of politics and how the society is organised."**

**The activities of the Warminster and District Foodbank continue apace.**

**Harvest time this year has been exceptionally busy. We have been amazed by the generosity of local people. We are receiving food from many schools, churches and local groups. The total receipts from the Harvest was 4,500kgs. That’s 50% up from last year.**

**People fed in November totalled 264  including 91 children. Many of our clients are in work and struggling to meet unexpected bills, illness etc.**

**We help folk across a wide age range, so if members of this church hear of people in difficulty please let them know we can help. Vouchers can be obtained from many** agencies.

Jean Colgrave

**Rotas for Church**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Dec/ Mar** | Vestry (V)/ Opening(O) | Books/Welcome | Coffee | Flowers  |
| Dec 1ST | Diana OMargaret V | Diana and Wendy | Debra and Dennis Major | Joan Jones |
| Dec 8th | Joan Stephens OKaren Woollard V | Marion and John Hornby | Margaret Edwards and Joan Stevens | Pauline Howell |
| Dec 15th | Hilary O/V | John and Stella Case | Brenda and Ron | Susan Hewitt |
| Dec 22nd | Karen O/V | Pam and Derrik Copeland | Jenny Sanderson and Hilda Hanks | Flower Ladies |
| Dec 29th | Marion O/V | Andy Simmons Karen Woollard | Joan and Evan Jones | Helen Dawson |
| Jan 5th | Barry O/V | Diana and Wendy | Mary and Barry Treadwell | Joan Stephens |
| 12th | Helen O/V | Karen Woollard and Mike Evans | Jenny Sanderson and Hilda Hanks | Pat Mills |
| 19th | Joan Jones OKaren Woollard V | Sandra Matthews Marion Barton | Joan and Evan Jones | Sandra Matthews |
| 26th | Hilda OMargaret McDonald V | Yvonne and David Syrett | Debra and Dennis Major | Marion Hornby |
| Feb 2nd | Diana OKaren V | Margaret Edwards Joan Stevens | Diana and Wendy | Joan Agnew |
| Feb 9th | Hilda O/V | Marion and John Hornby | Pam and Derrik Copeland | Wendy Wormesley |
| Feb 16th | Brenda OMarion V | Helen and Kevin Dawson | Brenda & Ron | Betty Fielding |
| Feb 23rd | Karen O/V | Pat and Dennis Mills | Barry and Mary Treadwell | Margaret McDonald |
| Mar 2nd | Marion O/V | John and Stella Case | Debra and Dennis Major | Pam Copeland |
| Mar 9th | Barry O/V | Karen Woollard and Mike Evans | Yvonne and David Syrett | Stella Case |
| Mar 16th | Helen O/V | Andy Simmons Jenny Sanderson | Joan and Evan Jones | Hilda Hanks |
| Mar 23rd | Hilary O/V | Gordon and Margaret McDonald | Brenda and Ron | Mary Treadwell |
| Mar 30th | Karen O/V | Pat and Dennis Mills | Pam and Derrik Copeland | Jean Colgrave |

Pastoral Matters

Our congregation is ever evolving and so it is that we thank God for the life of Denis Stevens and for bringing him to us for the short time he was with us. Denis was known to all of us for his love of life and his commitment to the Christian life; it was our blessing to have him with us.

We welcome new members from Imber Court, some of whom, I confess are not known to me by name but I’m sure that they will join with us as we celebrate the coming of our Lord at Christmas time. Welcome to each one of you and please make yourself known to me.

All of us are busy with our commitments in church that it is not always easy to talk to new members as they arrive amongst us. Perhaps it may be an opportunity to get to know one other more easily if we join together at one of the weekly Saturday coffee mornings that David Morgan has reintroduced. Can we allocate one to a ‘get to know each other’ morning?

We remember at this special time friends who cannot be with us because of failing health; Howard and Audrey in Westbury, Ivy Seabrook, Chris and Derek Walton, Thelma, Gladys Turner, John Hewitt and Margaret and Tony as they settle into their new home. We remember others who have been amongst us but are no longer able to be here. We send our best wishes to Hazel Andrews as she moves into Deverill House. It is good to see June Laird with us more often and hope that her health improvement continues. Zenobia and her family are leading a busy life but hope to come to Church soon.

*Marion Barton*

GLADYS TURNER wishes to say “Thank You” for the flowers taken to her recently and for all the people who think of her. We will all be thinking of her especially in December as we send good wishes for her 103rd Birthday.



Many thanks to all who helped in any way with the preparation of Christmas Boxes. 79 have been packed and, by the time you are reading this, will be on their way to children in Bulgaria. These will mean a lot to those who receive them who may get nothing else at Christmas. To see the large amount of knitted hats, mitts, scarves & teddy bears , to say nothing of mountains of soap, toothpaste and brushes, note pads, pens and pencils, underclothes, toys and much more was very heart warming. £130 was also donated towards the cost of transport. Thank you all for your generosity*. Joan Jones*

DENIS STEVENS

Denis only with us for a couple of years but added a lot to our church fellowship. He came to Warminster after the death of his wife Doreen, to whom he was devoted. They had no children of their own but Denis put a lot of time and effort into his work with the Boys Brigade – no doubt sharing his love of cricket with the boys! ( he was a fervent supporter of Kent Cricket Club). He also helped at the Leonard Cheshire Association. When he came to Warminster he approached the local branch with a view to continue helping but his illness, only 2 weeks after he arrived, made this impossible. It didn’t, however, stop him from organising a recorded music society at Imber Court where he lived and making plans to start a similar group at Woodmead. In fact just a week before he died he was arranging a CRB check to enable him to do this! He joined the Wendy House Group where he shared his daily walk with God with others and quickly became a very valued member. He was always willing to share his faith in our ‘local arrangement’ services. He told us of his mother reading Psalm 91 to her children when their father was missing in the war, and how he had always found it a comfort.

“ God says ‘ I will save those who love me’..... ‘when they are in trouble I will be with them’” v 14/15

**Kenyan Request**

Thank you all for giving so generously to the appeal I made for pain-killing tablets and donations to be sent to Mtangani Village, Malindi, Kenya.

I have a letter from Mrs Young in which she explains that the people who live in the Bush Village were given a new medical centre but had to make it work themselves for six months before they would be given a doctor or any supplies. Her family have been supporting the village since 1996 and the Safari family in particular.

Mrs Young has lent me a file of all the letters received from Safari which show how he has grown over the years and how the support of Mrs Young has made a difference to his life. He sent a text to her saying ‘We love you all’ when she told him a parcel was being sent.

You really have made a difference.

*Marion Barton*

**£52 has been donated to Medair from the collection at our church’s Harvest Festival lunch.**

**PAULINE HOWELL’S MEMORIES OF ‘DAD’**

As most of you know a major part of my recent life has been caring for my husband’s parents. Dad had been living at Greengates Care Home since April last year and it was there that he passed on in his sleep a few weeks ago. I asked Rev David if I could do the eulogy and for me it was an honour to speak about my gentle giant. I know that speaking at such an event would never have been possible if I had not been supported and encouraged in my experiences here at the United Church, and so I wanted to share some of my memories with you all.

When Ray first took me home to meet his parents, strict instructions had been given “to clear up the papers”. Dad read The News of The World on Sundays and would spread it around the sitting room, along with The Western Daily Press which he continued to read until about a year ago. I found it perfectly natural to call him Dad from that first day, because that’s what he was – it described him exactly – steady – reliable and funny! Dad liked to watch the wrestling on Saturday TV, and would shout instructions to Mick McManus and Giant Haystacks with such enthusiasm we worried about the furniture. He liked big band music – and always told the joke about how he met Joe Loss’s bother Dead Loss.

Although I wasn’t around for the first half of his life, I did get to hear all about his childhood and parents, Granny and family at Shirehampton, and early work experiences. He would ride his bicycle from Warminster to Shirehampton, leaving at half four in the morning, to start his shift on the Western National buses.

He spoke about how he met Mum, a Land Army girl, while he was on the buses, and about converting the Nissen hut at Battlesbury Camp into a des res. Where he led, many followed. So much so the Local Authority had to build the Boreham Field estate to accommodate those families who had also moved into the disused army buildings.

Local historian Danny Howell (no relation) visited Dad in 1996 and managed to capture some of the memories that made Dad the man he was, determined to get a job done despite few resources but with plenty of innovation.

Ray tells me they were one of the first families in the street to have a car, because Dad wasn’t above dragging home an old wreck and repairing it. He would drive it around – in his words – “as proud as a louse”. As a boy, Ray always had that support from Dad. If he wanted to make or repair something, Dad was there with advice and a helping hand. Such big hands.

And it was he that spotted the talent in Ray’s hands, so like his own, and set Ray on his path to being the quality joiner he is today. In fact Ray has many of his Dad’s ways (our first washing machine was pulled from the hedge and restored in front of the sitting room fire).

Later on, when we had an old Ford van in need of a recon engine I remember Dad and Ray taking the old engine out – no lifting tackle, just Dad with a piece of rope and his broad shoulders. Such broad shoulders.

He was a strong man, a big man, in every sense. A man with great humility and sense of humour, with a twinkle in his eye and a smile that came from deep within and lit up his whole being. Such a big smile. Sharing a joke right up to those last few days before he started his big sleep.

That was something else he was good at : sleeping. It was a privilege to be with him during those last few days, when we sang together the hymns he learned as choir boy at St John’s and still knew the words and tunes at almost 92 years old. Now our wonderful Dad, mentor, friend, who was always at peace with his place in life, will be at peace for ever.

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**CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL**

**At The Minster Church**

**6th to 8th December**

**Church will be open to see the trees**

**10 a.m. to 4 p.m Friday 6th & Saturday 7th**

**11.30 a.m to 3.30p.m. Sunday 8th**

**Father Christmas will be in attendance on Saturday.**

**Festival Service 4 p.m. Sunday**

**Friday 6th 7p.m.**

 **MILITARY WIVES CHOIR**

**Tickets £12.50 from Information Centre £15 at door**

**Friday 13th December at Civic Centre 10 a.m – 12 noon**

**TABLE TOP SALE**

**Warminster & District Link Scheme**

**Age UK & Good Neighbours**

**‘GETTING TO KNOW YOU’ DINNERS**

Several of these dinners have now taken place and those of us involved have enjoyed getting to know each other better, also raising money for charities. It would be great if more people were involved. Not everyone needs to be able to host a meal. Each meal needs more guests than hosts! If you would like to join in an ordinary meal with others do ask Helen Dawson for more details.

**INCARNATION**

**He’s grown, that Baby.**

**Not that most people have noticed.**

**He still looks the same,**

**Lying there on his bed of straw, with**

**Animals and shepherds looking on.**

**He’s safe there, locked in that moment**

**Where time met Eternity.**

**Reality of course if different,**

**He grew up, astonished people with his**

**Insight, disturber them with**

**Ideas that stretched them into**

**New maturity.**

**Some found him**

**Much too difficult to cope with,**

**Nailed him down to fit their**

**Narrow minds.**

**We are more subtle,**

**Keep him helpless,**

**Refuse to let him be the Man he is,**

**Adore him as the Christmas Baby,**

**Eternally unable to grow up**

**Until we set him free.**

**By all means let us pause there**

**At the stable, and**

**Marvel at the miracle of birth.**

**But we’ll never get to know**

**God with us, until we learn**

**To find him at the Inn,**

**A fellow guest who shares the joy and sorrow,**

**The Host who is the life we celebrate**

**He’s grown, that Baby.**

*By Ann Lewis*