

**The
Messenger**

STAFFORD BAPTIST CHURCH

The Green, Bailey Street, Stafford



November 2017 — January 2018

November / December

November

Wed 01	11 am	Friends Together
Sun 05	10.15 am	Kids Zone Church
	10.30 am	Morning Worship with Communion
Mon 06	7.30 pm	Deacons Meeting
Sun 12	10.15 am	Kids Zone Church
	10.30 am	Morning Worship
	6.30 pm	Songs of Praise at Drakeford Court
Mon 13	10.15 am	Prayers & Pastries
Wed 15	7.30 pm	Church Meeting
Sun 19	10.00 am	Morning Worship
	10.45 am	Messy Church
Sun 26	10.15 am	Kids Zone Church
	10.30 am	Morning Worship
Wed 29	7.30 pm	Fellowship Prayer Time

December

Sun 03	10.15 am	Kids Zone Church Advent Sunday
	10.30 am	Morning Worship
Wed 05	11 am	Friends Together Christmas meal
Sat 09	Tba	Christmas Coffee Morning/Open Day
Sun 10	10.30 am	All Age Nativity with shared lunch & Gift Service
Mon 11	10.15 am	Prayers & Pastries
Tues 12	3.00 am	Carols at Humphrey Court
Wed 13	7.00 pm	Carols at Drakeford Court
Sun 17	4.30 pm	All Age Candlelight Carols & Christingle Celebration
Sun 24	10.15 am	Kids Zone Church
	10.30 am	Morning Worship
Mon 25	10.00 am	Christmas Morning Celebration Offering to Spurgeons Appeal
Sun 31	10.30 am	Morning Worship

A message from the new Associate Minister, Danielle Leigh

Hello everyone! It is now two months since we moved into the manse and we're feeling very much at home. The children have settled into their new schools, Siy is keeping busy doing up our old house and looking after us all, and I'm enjoying the new rhythms and challenges of this full time ministry lark! It honestly is a real blessing and a privilege to be part of The Green and I'm so thankful that God called me here – there's a real peace and security in knowing that you're just where you're meant to be.

Everyone has been very kind and welcoming to us, and I've been impressed and encouraged by the amount of time and effort that so many people give in service at The Green each month. Whether it's in the kitchen, on welcome duty, in the worship team, in the Messy Church team, in the book shop, at Sticky Fingers, in KidZone, at BBGA, working on the computer at home or anything else that I've missed (like setting up the heating each week!) – **thank you!** Your efforts are appreciated and I pray God would bless you and encourage you in your service for him.

Around the time of my induction I had a verse shared with me several times so I believe it's something God wants me to keep coming back to. It's Proverbs 3:5-6 '**Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.**' (NLT) It's always good to remind ourselves to seek God first – that prayer is a priority in our lives and should underpin all our activities at The Green. If we seek his will in all we do I am confident that he will lead us in the right direction – and that direction is upwards towards blessing and growth! **Amen!**

Dear Friends,



Christmas is coming!

Let me be the first to wish you a really happy Christmas and God's richest blessings for the New Year, as you turn the pages of this November/December/January edition of *The Messenger*.

With Christmas comes all the busyness, and the frantic planning and preparation, and the near panic activity ...

... but what an amazing opportunity to celebrate the sheer wonder of God choosing to come right into this world of ours; born as one of us, so we can know him and find life, hope and love, because of Jesus, Immanuel, God with us.

... and what amazing opportunities for sharing this good news, and welcoming other people into the story that we know so well. Do make use of the many different Christmas occasions to celebrate the Saviour and to invite family and friends to come along and meet him too.

Here's an idea. When you're sending Christmas cards to friends locally, why not slip in one of our Christmas services cards? They'll be available by mid-November.

Christmas does have a lot of frantic activity attached to it, and the good news of Jesus can so easily be missed even when we know it so well. At the first Christmas God very deliberately chose to come and be with us ... giving us the open invitation to be with him. Let's especially invite Jesus into all our celebrations and events, at home and in church; and make a space – perhaps every day during Advent – just to be quietly with him, and know that he is with us.

**Be still and know that I am God.
Immanuel, God with us.**

Ron

MESSY CHURCH

family friendly, and for all ages together



Dates for MESSY CHURCH:

Sunday 19th November

Sunday 21st January

at **10.45am** - following 10AM Service

In DECEMBER look out for:

Sunday 10th, 10.30am

All-Age Messy Nativity Service

Sunday 17th, 4.30pm

All-Age Candle Light, Carols and Christingle
Celebration - *it's for all the family*

- We now have a new 'Love Stafford' notice board at church. I'll be putting up all the info, prayer requests and job opportunities that come up each week so do check it out.
- Did you know HEBA run a study programme called 'Learning at the Centre'? It is open to anyone and covers a list of modules for you to choose from over a three year period. Each module is delivered over two Saturdays in their Selly Oak centre and topics include: pastoral care, reading and using the Bible, theology, leadership skills, and engaging with contemporary culture. The charge is £60 per module which includes handouts, two days of teaching, and marking of assignments (optional), and HEBA has a small bursary available if cost is a problem. Do speak to Danielle if you're interested, or check out their website for more details:
www.baptist-heartofengland.org/learning-at-the-centre

Thanks, Danielle.

Just a reminder - If you use the weekly envelopes for your regular giving, please remember that enough tax must have been paid for tax relief to be claimed by the church. For every £10 given, £2.50 can be reclaimed by the church, assuming that tax has been paid on the £10. With the rise in personal tax allowance, and the practice of banks and building societies of paying



interest without any deduction of tax, more people than ever have not needed to pay any income tax. If you do not think that you pay enough income tax for it to all be claimed back, then it is better to give cash in the loose offering, as the government allows the church to claim tax back on the loose offering, whether or not tax might have been paid by the donors.

Congratulations:

Congratulations to **Dennis and Marjory Weller** on their recent marriage and to **Dennis** on his 90th Birthday in January





Everyone is welcome to our



Messy Nativity!

Sunday 10th December, 10.30am
With a bring & share lunch afterwards

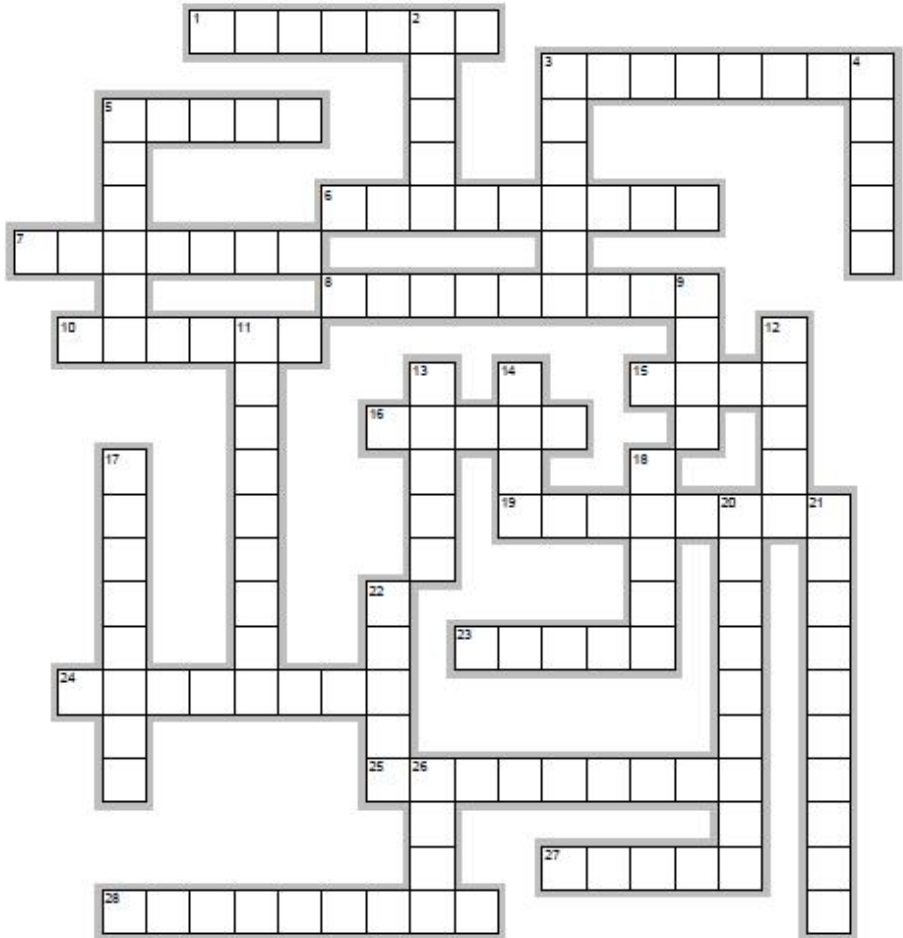


There will be an opportunity to take part in our 'have-a-go' nativity play - come dressed up as a nativity character or use one of our costumes.



The Birth of Jesus

The story of the birth of Jesus is one of most beloved in the entire Bible. We know that some of these answers will be easy for you. But you may need to look up a few. We used the Matthew, Chapters 1-2 and Luke, Chapters 1-2 in the New International Version.



EclipseCrossword.com



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Across

1. Angel who told Mary that she'd have a Son
3. "The holy one to be born will be called the ___ ___ ___."
5. Old Testament prophet who said a ruler over Israel would be born in Bethlehem.
6. Where Joseph and Mary went to register for census
7. "Glory to God in the ___"
8. Governor of Syria when census was taken
10. Occupation of Elizabeth's husband
15. Wise men from the east
16. The angel told Mary she had found ___ with God.
19. Town in which Mary was living before the birth
23. The king of Judea at the time of Christ's birth
24. Name of the Caesar who called for a census
25. What Mary and Joseph offered at the Temple
27. The Wise Men brought gold, incense and ___ to Jesus.
28. Elizabeth's husband

Down

2. An angel told Joseph to flee to this country to keep the Baby safe
3. Devout man who waited at the Temple to see the Christ
4. God warned the Wise Men in a ___ to take a different route home.
5. Where Mary laid Jesus after wrapping him in cloths
9. What led the Wise Men from the east to Jesus
11. They were tending flocks when an angel told them of Christ's birth
12. Number of days after his birth when Jesus was presented at the Temple
13. "He will be great...and he will reign over the house of ___ forever..."
14. Name of Elizabeth's baby
17. Name for Jesus that means, "God with us."
18. Jesus would be given the throne of this father
20. Mary's relative who was also expecting a child
21. Elizabeth was filled with the ___ ___ when Mary visited her.
22. Name that was to be given to Mary's son
26. Prophetess at the Temple who gave thanks for the Child

FREE FROM DEPRESSION: KAMALA'S STORY

Following the 2015 Nepal earthquakes, your giving to BMS World Mission is helping people rebuild their lives.



Hundreds of thousands of pounds were given to the BMS Nepal earthquake appeal. £100,000 of that has gone to Gorkha district, one of the areas hardest hit by the earthquake. Here, we're helping around 12,000 people by rebuilding homes, providing healthcare services, and empowering people through self-help groups and advocacy.

One of those you're helping is 28-year-old Kamala. "I had depression," she says. "Because of this, I couldn't work to support my family. I had to quit my teacher training." As a girl, Kamala suffered with bone problems in her legs. At 12 she had surgery, which initially worked. But six years later her condition came back, worse than before. The problems led to an infection and made it extremely painful to move.

"I would just lie in bed all day," says Kamala. "It was awful." Her physical pain massively impacted her mental health, too. She stopped speaking to her friends and family. She started to lose hope.

Things got even more difficult for Kamala when she lost her home following the earthquakes. But she wasn't ready to give up. She joined a self-help group, which BMS helped set up to aid people's recovery. People in the group encouraged her to see a doctor and they prayed for her.

Kamala met a BMS partner and got financial help. She was able to go to a hospital, where she finally got the right medications to treat her depression and legs. Along the way, she became a Christian.

"I feel much better now," says Kamala, with the biggest grin. "My dream is still to be a teacher someday."

Kamala is just one of the people your giving is helping in Gorkha. Empowering people to chase fullness of life in Nepal – that's what your giving to BMS enables. Thank you.

Action! Help us help more people across the world today.

Donate here:

bmsworldmission.org/give

welcoming Teams



Nov 05	Linda	Derek
12	Connie	Janet M-W
19	Eslyn	Ora
26	Nigel	Claire
Dec 03	Linda	Derek
10	Connie	Janet M-W
17	Eslyn	Ora
24	Nigel	Claire
31	Connie	Janet M-W
Jan 07	Linda	Derek
14	Connie	Janet M-W
21	Eslyn	Ora
28	Nigel	Claire

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12-19-1997

I'M SORRY GUY, I KNOW THAT YOU'VE GOT A
GOOD HEALTH PLAN AND YOU GIVE OUT FREE
GIFTS AND ALL, BUT JESUS REALLY DOES
HAVE A MUCH BETTER PLAN



Carols and Christingles

Sunday 17th December, 4.30pm

Everyone in the family is welcome to come along, make a Christingle and sing some Christmas carols.



Christmas Bells

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along
The unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Till, ringing, singing on its way
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime,
A chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Then from each black, accursed mouth
The cannon thundered in the South,
And with the sound
The Carols drowned
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;
'There is no peace on earth,' I said;
'For hate is strong,
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!'

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
'God is not dead; nor doth he sleep!
The Wrong shall fail,
The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will to men!'

Longfellow

BUILDING BRIDGES AND COMMUNITY IN ALBANIA

A men's group supported by BMS World Mission in Albania is bringing people from different cultural backgrounds together to talk about God, life and football.

Every Tuesday twenty men sit around a table. They barbeque and chat about work, spirituality, sport and everything in-between. In Albania, this is an uncommon sight. Especially for men.



"It's grown beyond our expectations," says Mat Gregory, the BMS mission worker who leads the 'Eat, talk, pray' group. Beginning with five men a year ago, the group has quadrupled in size.

It's rare to get men in Albania to meet like this, particularly to chat about spirituality. Most who meet have never been to church, but are open to discussing faith in the group. As relationships have strengthened, it's created an open and respectful environment where participants are comfortable enough to share more personal feelings. "For men here, this is quite hard," says Mat. "They're less open and a little more suspicious. It's taken longer, but we've reached a

deeper level. A level where we talk about issues doesn't come naturally for men; it's really great we've reached it."

It's also unique to get such a diverse group of men together. Ranging in ages from 15 to late 60s, men from Egyptian, Roma and Albanian backgrounds share together around the same table. "It's exciting," says Mat. "Bridges are being built between neighbours that previously wouldn't have wanted to."



There's also hope that a new group will form. "There have been individuals who want to go on a more in-depth spiritual journey," says Mat. "We're hoping to create a group that will follow a more structured discipleship programme."

These informal church groups are simple – gathering around a table to share food, life and faith. They are also extraordinary: they are helping people connect with each other, despite differences, and to see God in a whole new light.

Pray! *Join with the work of BMS workers in Albania. Commit to praying for those working to make God's love known there today.*

January

January

Wed 03	11 am	Friends Together
Sun 07	10.15 am	Kids Zone Church
	10.30 am	Morning Worship
Mon 08	10.15 am	Prayers & Pastries
Wed 10	7.30 pm	Church Meeting
Sun 14	10.15 am	Kids Zone Church
	10.30 am	Morning Worship
	3.00 pm	Organ Recital, tea and cakes
Sun 21	10.00 am	Morning Worship
	10.45 am	Messy Church
	6.30 pm	Love Stafford Mission Market at Rising Brook Baptist Church
Sun 28	10.15 am	Kids Zone Church
	10.30 am	Morning Worship
Wed 31	7.30 pm	Fellowship Prayer Time



Flower Rota

Nov 06	Olive Hynam
13	Rosemary Smith
20	Julie Lanes
27	Libby Davies
Dec 03	Irene Woolrich
10	Shirley Jervis
17	Shirley Jervis
24	Shirley Jervis
31	Shirley Jervis

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Sunday Worship Services Every Sunday at 10.30 am

Full youth & children's programme every Sunday morning

Communion Services every 1st Sunday morning

'Sticky Fingers' <i>(parents and under 5's)</i>	Thurs 10 to 11.30 am
Friends Together <i>(over 55's)</i>	Monthly on first Wednesday 11 am to 3.00 pm
Boys' Brigade and Girls' Association	Thursday at 6.30 pm
Christian Book Shop	Monday and Friday - 10 am to 2 pm, Saturday - 9:30 am to 2 pm.
Open Door <i>(A time for a drink and a chat)</i>	Weekly on Friday 10 am to 12 noon