



## Lent Rise Matters - the info sheet for Lent Rise Methodist Church

### THIS WEEK

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December 10:30am we welcome Rev'd Vicci Davidson  
to our pulpit , for a  
Christmas Service - 9 Lessons and Carols.**

### Prayer Cards

If you would like to ask for prayer for a specific person or event, please complete a prayer card, to be found on the table at the entrance to the Church.

*We have been asked to pray for Joanne Prior.*

*If you are new here today and would like to keep in touch please look out for one of our yellow Welcome Cards, enter your details and hand the card to a Steward.*

### Prayer of the week:

**As we prepare, in our various ways to welcome the Christ child into our homes and lives, a few extra prayer points please:**

- **Preparations for our Christmas outreach: Cod and Carols and the Christingle Service on Christmas Eve.**
- **Please remember those who may be alone over the Christmas period.**
- **That all who come through our doors over this period may feel the love of Christ in this place...and want to find out more.**

You might like to know that the current exhibition at the Stanley Spencer Gallery in Cookham, 'Everywhere is Heaven' will be featured in the Methodist Recorder of 22<sup>nd</sup> December. The exhibition is a collaboration between the Gallery and Roger Wagner, a modern contemporary artist who was inspired by Spencer. Both artists have produced visionary religious paintings, and the title of the exhibition, 'Everywhere is Heaven', is inspired by Stanley Spencer's painting, 'John Donne arriving in Heaven'.

The Gallery was the Methodist Church in Cookham Village until 1910, when the congregation moved to the larger and current church in Cookham Rise. Stanley Spencer's mother was a keen member of the congregation and took Stanley there as a boy. He drew a picture 'Ecstasy in a Wesleyan Chapel' which is owned by the Gallery, but he never turned this into a finished painting.

The Gallery is open in the winter from Thursday to Sunday from 10.30am until 4.30pm, entrance £7, (£3.50 for Advantage Card holders), and the exhibition runs until 24<sup>th</sup> March.

**This week in Burnham Methodist Church:**

**Monday Club for Senior Citizen's** from Burnham Community Association. For more information call Steve Tindall 07780 665910

**Tuesday LentRisers Toddler Group** enjoyed a lovely party on Tuesday, with a visit from Santa of course. 😊. We are on holiday now until mid-January.

**Wednesday The Meeting Place** from The Well@Lent Rise from 9:30am – 12midday. A place for all ages to come and simply be, with coffee or tea, cake and a special warm welcome.

**Thursday CAMEO lunch club for Senior Citizen's** from 12:00midday. For more information or to book please speak to Jo Webb.

**Bible Study**, led by Revd Vicci. 10:00am – 12:00pm. Next meeting Friday 22nd December. Please join us on the final stage of our adventure with the Book of James.

**Dates for your diary**

**Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December** Cod and Carols 6:00pm for 6:30pm. Book the date. It was a really good night last year – don't miss out 😊. **Please talk to Pauline direct if you would still like a ticket, but haven't booked yet.**

**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> December** 10:30am Preparation of Christingle.

**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December Christingle Service 10:30am. It would be nice to offer mince pies at the end of the service and we will need help on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> preparing the Christingles. Please speak to Pauline if you can offer help with either of these.**

**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> December** – Revd Vicci will lead our Christmas Day Service at 9:00am

**Please be advised there will not be an evening service on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> January.**

**Many of us are shopping online** these days and the Church has signed up to a site through which some of our most loved retailers will give us a donation every time we shop.

Sign up and help us raise funds by:

1. Visit the link below
2. Search for Burnham Methodist Church
3. Your favourite brands will donate when you shop with them. This includes Booking.com; ebay; M&S; Curry's; TUI; BT and John Lewis  
[www.easyfundraising.org.uk/support-a-good-cause](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/support-a-good-cause)

Friends

Those of you who came to the concert on the 2nd of December at Windsor Methodist Church would have heard me read that wonderful series of letters imagined by the hilarious John Julius Norwich and suggesting the reality of being on the receiving end of the gifts of the 12 Days of Christmas. Having been really rather pleased with the five gold rings (“lovelier in a way than birds which do take rather a lot of looking after”) our heroine, Emily, becomes increasingly distressed with cows chomping on the herbaceous borders and leaping Lords chasing dancing ladies all over the lawns, until she is forced to require the help of a firm of solicitors.

We all enjoy a rendition of the 12 Days of Christmas, but the song, and the comic book, reference a more serious point which is that Christmas is a 12 day feast from Christmas Day itself until Epiphany on the 6th of January. Yet so often, once we have done with Christmas Day, we don't quite know what to do with the odd in-between-time that leads up to New Year and never quite feels like proper days – we often forget which date we are on in that week – and then there is New Year and with a sigh of relief we get back to normality. We probably spent too long doing Christmassy things in Advent and are all Christmassed out.

Yet that was not how it once was. Advent was a serious time of waiting and preparation, sombre, thoughtful, Christmas Eve was a day of fasting and then Christmas Day itself was the beginning of 12 days of feasting and of present opening. It never was that all the presents would be opened in one fell swoop, but instead a present a day over the twelve days. It is hard to maintain the “not Christmas yet” feel of Advent when I keep being asked to go to Christmas parties and tell the story of Christmas at schools etc. but somehow this year, with all the political and financial difficulties, and the uptick in international violence, Advent has felt more solemn, more serious, less Christmassy. My prayer is, for all of us, that this will increase our sense of joy when Christmas arrives and that we might even be able to celebrate the season as it was in days of yore when for 12 days we would feast and rejoice that a virgin had conceived and born a son and that his name was Emmanuel: God with us.

Wishing you and yours a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

God bless

Vicci