



# CONNECT

**NAILSEA UNITED  
REFORMED CHURCH  
MAGAZINE  
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*O come, all ye faithful,  
joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem*

Minister Revd John Gray - details on Contact Page  
Church Secretary Mrs Sally Edmondson

Dear Friends,

we realise that children play a special role in Christmas celebrations. Churches with Junior Church, Sunday School and with the uniformed organisations usually include a musical piece sung by a children's choir, or a child's solo, Nativity Play featuring children as the Holy Family, angels and shepherds, or a Christmas tableau in their Carol Service. Children do write letters to Santa – even in this “enlightened” Internet age asking for Christmas presents. Children are depicted in Christmas adverts as wide eyed with wonder as they look at the Christmas lights on their trees and open gifts on Christmas morning. Their wonder, joy and enthusiasm is often a balm and a tonic to the tired and aching hearts of adults, for whom wonder is a thing of the past.

Christmas is for children, indeed. For all God's children, old or young. Wide eyed with wonder or hardened by hurt. Charles Dickens' *Christmas Carol* and Hallmark greeting cards may condition us to view Christmas sentimentally. The Christmas trees in our lovely sanctuaries and homes may subtly reshape our thinking in ways that might almost suggest that the Son of God was born in the English countryside, in a cosy rural B&B accompanied by a Walt Disney assortment of cuddly farm animals. Then comes the reality. While I do not wish to appear Scrooge during this season of wonder and magic, our selection of Christmas Carols should include those that remind us that there are so many children and adults in the world for whom the joy of Christmas is far more complex and shadowed by pain, suffering and loneliness.

With these feelings I started write this article when I recalled the words of one of my favourite Christmas Carols, which is a mini sermon in itself: *Star-Child, earth-Child...go-between of God, love-Child, Christ Child, heaven's lightning rod, This year, let the day arrive when Christmas comes for everyone alive!*

At Christmas Jesus became one of us: “down-to-earth Child”. In other words, “Love came down at Christmas”. The New Zealander hymn writer Shirley Erena Murray brilliantly summed up what the Incarnation is all about by putting the baby Jesus in our modern context (please think of the war in Ukraine now): *"street child, beat child," "hurt child, used child," "grown child, old child," "sad child, lost child."* Yet he is our “*Hope-for-peace Child*” - and this is really good news! Truly, Christmas is for children. All God's children.

Have a peaceful and joyful Christmas!

John

## Christmas & News Day

This Christmas there will not be a Christmas Day Service or a Service on New Years Day here at Nailsea. We have had a warm invitation from our friends at the NAILSEA METHODIST Church as shown below.

### **“To all at Nailsea URC:**

You are most welcome to join us again on Christmas Day at 10.30 am for all age Christmas Day Worship. We love sharing the day with you!

We extend our very best wishes to everyone at Nailsea URC and the assurance of our thoughts and prayers.”

Revd Deborah Mallett

## Commitment for Life Prayer

### Prayer for Healthcare for the World

Life-giving God,

We pray for a new Earth where individuals matter more than profits; where women and children are empowered; where special need, ill-health, other ability or disadvantage is no bar to a fulfilling life; where vested interests do not prevent anyone from accessing medical treatment.

We ask for clean water, decent sanitation, living space and health education for all people, especially those forced to crowd together in vast conurbations.

Above all, we thank you for ordinary **people** making change happen: Village Health Workers in Zimbabwe teaching Covid-19 precautions to remote communities; The Shisamondnay Forum in Bangladesh, promoting healthy vegetables for children to eat; UNES in Central America working with local health teams to tackle environmental health problems.

The Palestinian Agricultural Development Association and YMCA rehabilitation programme for people injured in conflict. And for every unsung hero whose love, your love, overflows into selfless action. For the sake of Jesus Christ who came to heal this suffering world. Amen.

Charles Jolly

## The URC daily devotions

The URC daily devotions can be accessed via [devotions.urb.org.uk](http://devotions.urb.org.uk) These are approximately 5 minutes long. The Sunday service can be accessed from the same site.

## Communion Offering for December

### Church Discretionary Fund



This year the fund will be given to the Southfield Road community Food bank



All you need to do is what is necessary  
and what is necessary  
I will give you strength to do  
So worrying about doing "what is necessary"  
Is quite  
Unnecessary

## Christmas Post Box

Over the last few years it was decided not to have the Christmas Post Box and instead members of the congregation gave one Christmas card addressed to the entire congregation to be displayed in church over the festive season. We would be very grateful for you to continue with this. Of course, if you wish to give cards to individuals then please pass these on to those concerned.

## Food for Thought

When the English tongue we speak,  
 Why is "break" not rhymed with "freak"?  
 Will you tell me why it's true  
 We say "sew" but likewise "few";  
 And the maker of a verse  
 Cannot rhyme his "horse" with "worse"?  
 "Beard" sounds not the same as "heard";  
 "Cord" is different from "word";  
 Cow is "cow", but low is "low";  
 "Shoe" is never rhymed with "foe".  
 Think of "hose" and "dose" and "lose";  
 And think of "goose" and yet of "choose".  
 Think of "comb" and "tomb" and "bomb";

"Doll" and "roll" and "home" and "some",  
 And since "pay" is rhymed with "say",  
 Why not "paid" with "said", I pray?  
 We have "blood" and "food" and "good";  
 "Mould" is not pronounced like "could".  
 Wherefore "done" but "gone" and "lone"?  
 Is there any reason known?  
 And, in short, it seems to me  
 Sounds and letters disagree.

Author Unknown

## Flower Rota DECEMBER

Offers to arrange in a vase appreciated. Please speak to Sally or Barbara. Also if you are aware of anyone who would appreciate receiving some flowers please let an elder know.

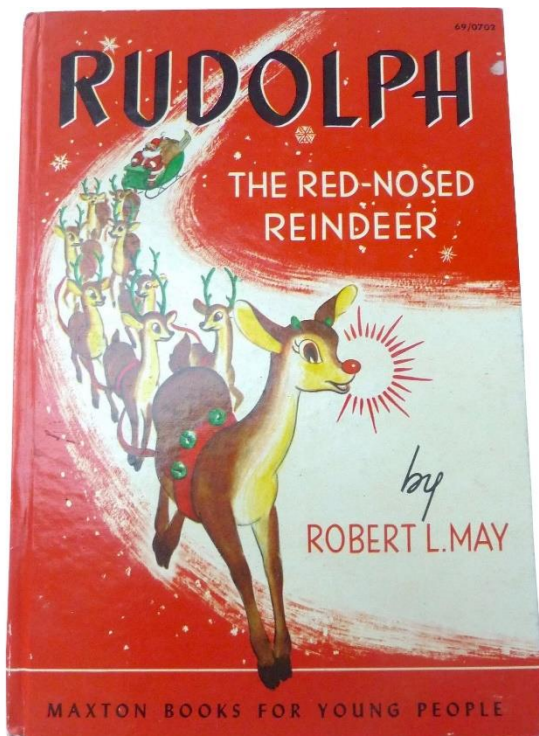
December           4:     Yvonne  
                           11:    Advent Ring  
                           18:    Advent Ring  
                           25:    No Service at URC  
 January            1:     No Service at URC

CHURCH EVENTS DIARY – DECEMBER 2022		
<b>SUNDAY 4<sup>TH</sup></b>	<b>COMMUNION WORSHIP</b> with Rev.d John Gray	<b>11.00AM</b>
<b>SUNDAY 11<sup>TH</sup></b>	<b>SUNDAY WORSHIP</b> with Mrs Stella Paterson	<b>11.00AM</b>
<b>SUNDAY 18<sup>TH</sup></b>	<b>CAROL SERVICE – WORSHIP TEAM</b> with Coffee & Mince Pies	<b>11.00AM</b>
<b>TUESDAY 20<sup>TH</sup></b>	<b>CAROL SERVICE</b> at The Methodist Church	<b>2.30PM</b>
<b>SUNDAY 25<sup>TH</sup></b>	<b>CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP</b> at The Methodist Church	<b>10.30AM</b>
<b>SUNDAY 1<sup>ST</sup></b>	<b>NEW YEARS DAY WORSHIP</b> at The Methodist Church	<b>10.30AM</b>

## Reading Rota for DECEMBER

December	4:	Patrick
	11:	Peter
	18:	Various
	25:	No Service at URC
January	1:	No Service at URC

If anyone in the congregation would like to read the scripture on a Sunday morning please see Isabel.



## Rudolph the Red-Nose Reindeer!

It was Christmas 1938. Bob May's wife had just died and he was left to care for their 4 year old daughter, Barbara. One night, Barbara asked her father, "Why am I different? Why haven't I got a mummy?" Bob wanted her to know that it was ok to be different and so he began to spin a tale about a reindeer with a bright red nose who found a special place on Santa's team. Barbara loved the story so much that she asked her father to tell it every night before bedtime. Because he couldn't afford to buy her a gift for Christmas, Bob decided to turn the story into a homemade picture book.

A few days before Christmas, he reluctantly attended a work's party at Montgomery Ward, the department store where he worked. His co-workers encouraged him to share the story he'd written. After he read it, there was a standing ovation. Everyone wanted copies of their own. Montgomery Ward bought the rights to the book from their debt-ridden employee. Over the next six years, at Christmas, they gave away six million copies of Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer to shoppers. Every major publishing house in the country was making offers to obtain the book. In an incredible display of good will, the head of the department store returned all rights to Bob May. Four years later, Rudolph had made him into a millionaire. Next, the little story was set to music and recorded by Gene Autry - Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer. Within a few years, it had become one of the best-selling Christmas songs ever. Since then, Rudolph has come to life in TV specials, cartoons, movies, toys, games, colouring books, and greeting cards. As the last line of the song says, "He'll go down in history."