

Buxton United Reformed Church

Hardwick Square East



December 2023

January 2024

An Advent Prayer for The Lord to Come

This Advent, Lord, come to the manger of my heart.
Fill me with Your presence from the very start.
As I prepare for the holidays and gifts to be given,
Remind me of the gift You gave when You sent Your Son from
Heaven.

The first Christmas gift, it was the greatest gift ever.
You came as a baby born in a manger.

Wrapped like the gifts I find under my tree,
Waiting to be opened, to reveal Your love to me.
Restore to me the wonder that came with Jesus'
birth,

When He left the riches of Heaven and wrapped
Himself in rags of earth.

Immanuel, God with us, Your presence came that
night.

And angels announced, "Into your darkness, God brings His Light."
"Do not be afraid," they said, to shepherds in the field.



Speak to my heart today, Lord, and help me to yield.
Make me like those shepherd boys, obedient to Your call.
Setting distractions and worries aside, to You I surrender them all.
Surround me with Your presence, Lord, I long to hear Your voice.

Clear my mind of countless concerns and all the holiday noise.
Slow me down this Christmas, let me not be in a rush.
In the midst of parties and planning, I want to feel Your hush.

This Christmas, Jesus, come to the manger of my heart.
Invade my soul like Bethlehem, bringing peace to every part.
Dwell within and around me, as I unwrap Your presence each day.
Keep me close to You, Lord. It's in Your wonderful Name I pray.



Renee Swope, ["The Manger of My Heart"](#)
from Proverbs 31 Ministries



***Waste Not Want Not
At Buxton United
Reformed Church.***

***Please join with us
for
free coffee, cake and
company***



gg89379251 GoGraph.com

***On Saturday 2nd December
And Saturday 6th January***



***Between
10am and 12midday
in the church***

***Love in the
community***

The King

(Maurice Cox: from Jesus is Alive (pp123-4), the Kairos Group, first published 1972) This poem was read by Roger Horne during the morning service on 'Christ the King' Sunday (Sunday before Advent).

The king? He's not our king! The Jews once cried.
Away with Him! Let Him be crucified!
His claim is false. He is no king of Jews.
Away with Him! Kill! Crucify! We choose
Barabbas. So a robber goes out free,
While Jesus Christ is led to Calvary.

The king? If King of Heaven, had He no power
To stay the surging evil of that hour?
He had - but out He went, and there He died
That sinners might be cleansed and justified,
Brought back to God. The wonder of this thing -
A pauper's pardon purchased by a King!

The King. Today mankind still turns Him down,
Still scourges, spits and plaits a thorny crown,
Still mocks His precious Name, still treads roughshod
Upon His claims - We have no time for God!
And so, the royal Saviour is denied
The souls for whom He once was crucified.

The King. Creator of all living things;
The Lord of Hosts; the mighty King of Kings;
The conqueror of Death; the Perfect One;
The Judge of all the Earth; God's Only Son;
The Christ of God is King! No power is known
To match in majesty His Heavenly Throne.

The King. Today this question comes anew –
Will you have Jesus to reign over you?
His hands and feet are pierced, His brow is scarred
But there is Glory in that face once marred.
He reigns! His claims come ringing, challenging –
Well, will you have Jesus Christ to be your King?

**Italian Quiz inspired by Debbie Delight following her holiday a few weeks ago.
Hope you enjoy it.**

1. How far is the leaning tower of Pizza leaning?



**2. What is a reliquary?
And what's in this reliquary?**



3. Here are 2 pictures of one particular reliquary – what's in it?



4. Who is this a statue of?



**5. Who is this world-famous statue of?
Who sculpted it?
At what age and how long did it take to finish it?**

Morrisons Buxton helps Waste Not Want Not with Giving Tree

Last year the giving tree in Morrisons helped raise £1000 which helped to make up 157 hampers and keep Waste Not Want Not going with other stock needed to feed the community.



This year customers can pick up a bauble worth £1, £2 or £5 to scan at the tills or ask a cashier to add a donation to the bill.

Six mornings a week come rain or shine, Catherine and Daniel and a team of volunteers can be found at the entrance to the United Reformed Church on Hardwick Square East



A big 'Thank You' to our Rainbows and Brownies for helping Cath and Stephanie Sterndale put together toiletry bags to be distributed with WNWV hampers this Christmas.

Buxton URC Sunday services

3 rd December	10:30am	Sue Powell
10 th December	10:30am	Caroline Andrews
17 th December	10:30am	Carol Service – Fellowship Group
24 th December	10:30am	Mark Houghton
31 st December	10:30am	Coffee/share/prayers
7 th January	10:30am	Tearfund Service– Fellowship Group
14 th January	10:30am	Sunday Night Live
21 st January	10:30am	Fellowship Service
28 th January	10:30am	National URC Service



Answers to Italian Quiz

1. *The leaning Tower of Pizza was leaning 5.5 degrees in the 14th century. After stabilisation work in 2001 it is now leaning 3.9 degrees. Some scientists say it will be upright by 2050!*
2. *A reliquary is a container for holy relics. St Paul's chains are in this reliquary!*
3. *St Paul's jaw bone is in this reliquary!*
4. *Statue is Moses.*
5. *Statue is David (as in David and Goliath). Sculpted by Michelangelo, age 26, who took 3 years to complete it.*

Dates to Remember

Fellowship Evenings: Wednesdays.

Join us at 7:30 to 9:00 pm:

Locations to be arranged.

Saturday Coffee Mornings

on 2nd December and 6th January



Carol Service on Sunday 17th December at 10.30 am

Elders and Leaders Meeting:-

10th January 2024 at 2:15pm

Contributions for the magazine

Thank you everyone who has contributed to this magazine.

We really do appreciate your contributions so please keep them coming.

Contributions please for the next magazine to

Eileen and Peter Blane by 29th January 2024.

To ensure your magazine is as informative as possible please keep us up-to-date with news and events.

We are producing only a limited number of printed magazines. An electronic version is available to read on the church's website: www.buxtonurc.org.uk





Gordon Brown at Greenbelt

His Christian perspective on World Events.

In August I attended the Greenbelt Festival – the annual arts, faith and justice event held at Boughton House, Northamptonshire. The URC is well represented there and runs the Waste Not café which uses surplus food from suppliers, saving it from landfill. Their unique selling point is “Our food is rubbish.” I was a café volunteer and a member of one of the teams which served refreshments to several thousand people over three days.

We had a lot of volunteers, which meant that there was also time to attend other events. One of them was a talk by Gordon Brown, the former labour Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1997 to 2007 and Prime Minister from 2007 to 2010. His father, he said, was a minister of the Church of Scotland and had a strong influence on him.



[HM Government](#)

Apparently, the Greenbelt management had offered Gordon the main stage but he said he would prefer a smaller, more intimate venue. Consequently, those inside in the chosen marquee were outnumbered by those sitting on the grass outside by about ten to one. There were several hundred of us. Fortunately, it was warm and dry.

He was greeted with rapturous applause. There was no doubt, right from the start, that the crowds were with him. As a former politician you would expect him to speak well, which he did, but he was surprisingly non-political.

He spoke first about poverty in the UK. He described Greenbelt as having strength and stability, throughout its 50 years existence, but said we were facing greater poverty now, than at any time during

those years. 400,000 families with no cooker, 700,000 children with no beds, six million lacking adequate furniture, 14 million regarded as poor, 19 million with no dignity, rising mental health issues, increasing numbers of children in care, despair in some areas, foodbanks essential for many in work, increasing homelessness etc etc.

He acknowledged that God helps those in need via charities (many of whom were represented at Greenbelt) but they are also struggling. Donations have been halved and homelessness charities are being overwhelmed. We need, he said, an anti-poverty coalition of organisations and government. The things he wanted us to remember were:

1. Do not be afraid to say that poverty is a moral issue.
2. Do not be afraid to use your faith when talking to politicians. Press and challenge them.
3. Test all arguments by debate and discussion.
4. We must be agents of hope for a better world.
5. Never stop believing that you can make a difference.

All great social movements in the past have had a faith-based approach. All major faiths have the equivalent of “blessed are the poor” and “do unto others as you would do to yourself”.

Historically, the debts of forty countries were wiped out by wealthier nations but now that needs doing again. He spoke about existentialism – the philosophy which explores the meanings and values of human existence. If we work together, we can do a lot. He described last winter’s national “Warm Welcome” as a good approach – heat and friendship together across the country. He praised the

Trussell Trust and other organisations helping out with food, bedding, clothing, hygiene items etc particularly when surplus items are saved from destruction and landfill. In his view, all companies should



publish an impact report on how they affect people and the environment.

Nationally, as a country, we must honour our promises – too many promises to developing nations have been broken. In 2005, 0.28% of our national budget was spent on overseas aid, in 2011 it was up to 0.7% but now it is down to 0.5%. Hope dies when promises are broken.



He met Nelson Mandela on several occasions. Mandela told him that he always had a book about hope with him when he was in prison. He said that we need to hope even when things seem hopeless. We need to give people that hope.

We need to get taxation right – currently, inequality in wealth is twice as great as inequality in income.

He asked for questions from the floor. The first one was “what is the first thing you would do if you were prime minister again?” His answer was that he would look into Universal Credit and why it is not working properly. At present 55% of families with three children are officially in poverty; those with four children it is 77%. This cannot be right. We all need to recognise the lack of fairness in society.

Gordon spoke impassively and with humour. Several amusing stories illuminated his talk including one about a US president who, many years ago, would hand-write his speeches, with queries attached, and pass them to an assistant to check out and research the queries he raised. Often, he would write a note in the margin “refer to AG”. His

assistant reported back to him that the Attorney General’s office could not find any legal points involved. ““No” said the President, “AG means Almighty God”!



A recording of Gordon’s talk is available on the Greenbelt website.

Roger Horne



Please pray for:-

For the Saturday Coffee Mornings on
2nd December and 6th January.

For those families receiving the food hampers from Waste Not Want Not this Christmas time.

For the people of Ukraine: that the provisions being taken to them particularly in the eastern war zone by Faith in Action Missions and other relief agencies will give them some resemblance of normality in times of great hardship.

For the people of Gaza: that the humanitarian aid and other supplies will continue to get into the country and be distributed to those who need it.

For the people of Israel who have loved ones taken hostage: that the release of hostages will continue until all have been freed.

For Richard Bower as he continues to recover following complications after major abdominal surgery. He reports that he is getting stronger every day and feels he has turned a corner.




A Prayer for the start of a new year

We come, Lord, to the start of a new year, a chance for a new start in my life.

Last year has gone and with it any regrets, mistakes or failures I may have experienced.

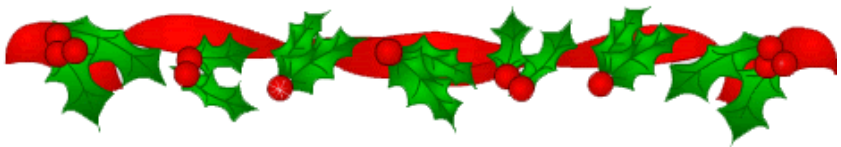
It's a good time to be glad and give thanks and I do, Lord.

Thank you for the year ahead, a new opportunity to love, give and be all that you want me to be.



“Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus”.

(Philippians 3:13-14 NIV)



“Don't you know that day dawns after night, showers displace drought and spring and summer follow winter?”

Then, have hope! Hope forever, for God will not fail you!”

(Charles Spurgeon)



Buxton United Reformed Church

Website: www.buxtonurc.org.uk

Minister for the North Derbyshire Resource Area
(which includes Buxton URC): **Rev. Caroline Andrews**

We warmly welcome everyone who wishes to join us for
Sunday worship

Details of services, including times, can be found inside this
magazine and on our website.

*We offer a sincere, loving welcome to all in
Christian Worship.*

Activities for young people

- **Rainbows:** for girls aged 5-7 Tues. 5 - 6pm
Leader: Stephanie Sterndale (Tel. 07967205209)
- **Brownies:** for girls aged 7-10 Tues. 6 - 7:30pm
Leader: Cath Sterndale (Tel. 07973670595)
- **Guides:** for girls aged 10 to 14 Tues. 6pm
Leader: Stephanie Sterndale (Tel. 07967205209)