



CORNERSTONE MAGAZINE

**December 2017 –
January 2018**

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From Amanda...



If I were to ask you to name the greatest journeys of all time, I wonder what would be at the top of your list? What about Christopher Columbus's discovery of the New World or Sir Edmund Hillary and the first successful Everest expedition? You might cite me the travels of Marco Polo or Stanley's search for Livingstone, or even Neil Armstrong's first steps on the moon. All great journeys indeed. But I bet none of you would come up with *The Greatest Journey*.

The Greatest Journey took place a long time ago. It didn't have an inspirational travel guide to accompany it, or a rough guide to expose it, nor did it receive a tripadvisor rating. And yet this journey influenced the entire history of the world. For this journey involved the Son of God leaving the heavenly realm to be born into our world, in an infant body and in a peasant town, in order to save the world. It's nothing if not audacious.

This journey is also shot through with tension. There is an angel who visits a young virgin to tell her she will become pregnant with God's son - social suicide for a first century woman. And this girl is merely a peasant girl, and the one she was promised to in marriage is a simple carpenter, and the baby is born in poverty, amongst animals, as no-one would make any room for them. God journeys to enter His world to join such a family, in such a setting, at such a time - hardly the stuff of travel legend.



The story of Jesus coming into the world turns out thinking inside-out and upside down. God's son—who will offer the world eternal paradise—is born to a poor family, into an inhospitable environment. There is smell and dirt and mess, and a family of social outcasts - hardly the stuff of your average nativity play.

But this journey has everything—audacity, wonder, awe, vulnerability, courage, tragedy. May you take a fresh look at the story again this year - for this journey was made for you. May you make room for Jesus this year and consider the impact that *The Greatest Journey* ever has on your life and your church.

*Christ's blessings,
Rev Amanda Roper*

Hunger - Enough is Enough

Hunger is not a simple problem, it's driven by issues such as climate change and conflict. But globally, the number of hungry people in the world has increased for the first time since the turn of the century according to UN reports. **So this Christmas, Christian Aid is asking all its supporters to join in saying Enough is Enough.**

There is enough food in the world, and we can tackle the complexities of hunger through life-saving aid and longer term solutions. But support is needed to help countries such as South Sudan. Aluel is the sole provider for her children. She runs a small business selling tea and bread at a market in the north of South Sudan but life has been a struggle. On a bad day, her family would eat just one meal, consisting of wild leaves. Aluel's family is one of 400 who have benefited from food vouchers, enabling her to buy healthy ingredients to cook nutritious meals for her children. 'Before **Christian Aid** intervened, life had become very difficult, we urgently needed help'.

In Burkina Faso, malnutrition is a constant threat. In the hottest months of the year, farming conditions are near impossible in the 45 degree heat. To tackle hunger, **Christian Aid** has set up numerous projects, including a market garden project. Previously Colette had been forced to walk miles, with her baby on her back, to search for gold in the country's gruelling mines. It was dangerous, insecure work and Colette made so little that she was often unable to pay healthcare costs, and her child suffered from malnutrition. With the support of the market garden project she has never had to return to the mines. After receiving a plot, she was trained to grow an abundance of vegetables, and provided with a watering can, tools and seeds. She said, 'The garden changed my life. I no longer need to buy vegetables and my food

This Christmas, we come together to recognise that in a world of plenty, there shouldn't be hunger. And this Christmas we can make double the impact as the UK Government will match every pound you give between 6 November and 5 February 2018. So please, if you can spare just a little, please put in one of **Christian Aid** boxes in the Church or Hall.

How past appeals have boosted child and maternal health

The 2014 and 2015 Christmas Appeals are reaping positive results, thanks to support from people like you. Every day, 830 women die from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth, 99% in developing countries. Following the 2014 appeal, a three year project has been set up in Kenya's Isiolo County, and Malawi's Karonga District. From renovating rundown health facilities and setting up clinics to donating medical equipment and training nurses, this work is making a difference to thousands of mums and babies.

Following the 2015 appeal 500 volunteers have been trained to deliver lifesaving healthcare to children in Nigeria. **Christian Aid** also provides free medicines for treating malaria, oral rehydration salts, antibiotics, paracetamol and other materials used by the trained healthcare volunteers. **So thank you for all your past support – it is saving lives.**

Teresa

HOLY CROSS FESTIVAL OF CHRISTMAS TREES

Cornerstone will have a tree in this Festival, so do please go and see it. Last year over 5,000 people visited the Festival, so this will be an excellent way of telling Uckfield that Cornerstone is active in the town. Come and see our 'Cornerstone' Tree celebrating the coming together of Methodist and URC congregations in Uckfield.

The opening times of the Festival at Holy Cross Church are:

Friday 1st December 10am-9pm

Saturday 2nd December 10am-6pm

Sunday 3rd December 11:30am-4pm

It will be a really delightful event.

GET PROPERLY DRESSED!

In the far East of Germany, on the bank of the river Neisse where it forms the boundary with Poland, stands the town of Guben. It is about the size of Uckfield. During the 17th century, the population was around 5,000, and its mayor was a lawyer named Johann Franck. Herr Franck wrote hymns. As he grew older he became rather long-winded, but his early efforts were good. In his thirties he wrote "the finest of all German hymns for Holy Communion" - *Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele*. All Franck's nine verses were included in a hymn book printed in Berlin in 1653. I have found four English metrical versions, of which the earliest, and the best for congregational singing, is Catherine Winkworth's translation of verses 1,2,4,5,7 and 9. Three of these (1,7,9) are at 446 in *Rejoice and Sing*.

The good Herr Franck knew his Bible. He continually referred to scripture in his hymns. In Matthew 22, Jesus told the parable of the king's wedding banquet, and verse 12 deals with the unhappy guest who was not properly prepared. In Revelation 21, 2, John sees the new Jerusalem "prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband". In his hymn, Franck is looking forward to a Communion Service, and that, he says, requires as much careful preparation as a marriage. He, with the whole church, is like a bride before her wedding. So he sings *Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele*, which, literally translated, is *Adorn yourself, O dear Soul*. In the hymn there is real joy at the thought of union with Christ, but there is also some anxiety - I am going to unite myself to a great King!

It is notoriously difficult to translate poetry. Efforts to mirror both rhyme and meter usually finish with loss of the true meaning. I wanted to know what Franck actually wrote, and I was delighted when Irmi Nock very willingly agreed to do a prose translation for me - a tough job, considering Franck's date and his unfamiliar style. To give you a taste of the result, here is verse 2:

Hurry, like a loving bride, to meet your groom, who is knocking at the door of your heart with sweet words of grace. Be quick to open the gates of your spirit, speaking to him kindly - "Come in, my Beloved. let me kiss you! Do not let me be without you, ever!"

Christ and his Church are in love with each other!

Let's look at the music. There has only been one tune for this chorale. It was composed by Johann Crüger, who published it in 1653. Crüger was cantor in the Lutheran church of St Nicholas in Berlin, and founded a famous choir there. I wrote a page about him in the *Messenger* five years ago, so I will not repeat myself here.

60 years later, along came J S Bach. He was not going to let a good tune like that go unadorned. He wrote an organ prelude on it, which is one of the most beautiful pieces I know. Mendelssohn said "If life were ever to deprive me of hope and faith, this one chorale would bring them back".

By 1724, when Bach had moved to Leipzig, he borrowed Crüger's melody again, this time as the basis for a whole cantata. Strangely, Bach used only about half of Franck's text, - the rest is by "anon". Maybe Bach wanted something simpler or more 'modern' than Franck's verse, and asked a friend at the Thomaskirche to help. A Sunday morning service normally began at 7a.m. and lasted three hours. The cantata would take around 20 minutes, and Bach was expected to produce one every Sunday for 10 years!

Very ambitiously, URC Music made Bach's Cantata the focus of our meeting in Hungerford, Berkshire, last October. Sheila and I joined the fun. The score is quite difficult for amateurs, so Cornerstone can be proud that Sheila sang the alto solo, and sang it very well. The cantata as a whole is over-long for ordinary services today, and Bach's music calls for a very competent choir. The more manageable harmony that we have at R&S 446 is by Vaughan Williams - one of his many fine contributions to the English Hymnal of 1906. It is sad that we sing this treasure of a hymn so seldom - I cannot remember ever having done so.

I hope I have made it clear that I am not urging Christians to wear their best clothes every Sunday morning. Franck's hymn is about preparing the soul, not dressing the body. I recall Sunday lunch times long ago when the subject of conversation at the dinner table was the millinery of the ladies who had graced the pews. We have come beyond that!

DJT

ACTUAL COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY "THOMAS COOK VACATIONS" FROM DISSATISFIED CUSTOMERS:

1. "We went on holiday to Spain and had a problem with the taxi drivers as they were all Spanish."
2. "The roads were uneven and bumpy, so we could not read the local guide book during the bus ride to the resort. Because of this, we were unaware of many things that would have made our holiday more fun."
3. "It took us nine hours to fly home from Jamaica to England. It took the Americans only three hours to get home. This seems unfair."
4. "I compared the size of our one-bedroom suite to our friends' three-bedroom and ours was significantly smaller."

Diary Dates for December 2017 and January 2018

December

Saturday 2nd 10-12pm **Fairtrade coffee morning** at The Source
10.30-2pm Crowborough United Christmas Fair

Sunday 3rd 10.30am Morning Worship: Adam Earle

Monday 4th 7.00pm CiU Carol singing at Shaftesbury Court

Tuesday 5th Harlands School visit

Wed'day 6th 6.00pm CiU Carol singing at Thornbury

Friday 8th 7.00pm CiU Carol singing at Portman Court

Sunday 10th 10.30am Morning Worship (HC): Rev Amanda Roper

Tuesday 12th 1.45pm Bible study at Cornerstone

Saturday 16th 10-12pm Cornerstone Carol singing at Tesco

Sunday 17th 10.30am Morning Worship: John and Teresa Lane

Thursday 21st 10-12pm Cornerstone Carol singing at Tesco

Saturday 23rd 10-12pm Cornerstone Carol singing at Tesco

Sunday 24th 4.00pm Crib Service: Rev Amanda Roper

Monday 25th 10.00am Christmas Morning Worship: Adam Earle

Sunday 31st 10.30am Morning Worship: Robert Hinchliffe

January

Saturday 6th 10-12pm **Fairtrade coffee morning** at The Source

Sunday 7th 10.30am Morning Worship: Rev Ray King

Saturday 13th tba Cornerstone New Year's party

Sunday 14th 10.30am Morning Worship (Holy Communion and Covenant Service): Rev Amanda Roper

Sunday 21st 10.30am Morning Worship: Rev Keith Morrison

Sunday 28th 10.30am Morning Worship: Rev Amanda Roper

What are you doing in December and January?

Communion: **10th December – Trustee –** Carole Marchant

14th January - Trustee – Doug Scott

Ushers – Sheila Warner
Clare Warren

Trustee

Welcomers

'Door'

'Inside'

3rd DECEMBER	John Harriyott	Doug Scott	Sylvia Scott
10 th	John Lane	Clare Warren	Wendy Twigg
17 th	Carole Marchant	Lynne Coates	Christine House
24 th	Doug Scott	Bernard Cook	Hazel Cook
25 th	Norman Wood	Carole Marchant	Doug Scott
31 st	Hazel Cook	John Lane	Teresa Lane

7th JANUARY	Jeremy Hallett	Doug Scott	Sylvia Scott
14 th	John Harriyott	John Leng	Lynne Coates
21 st	John Lane	Clare Warren	Wendy Twigg
28 th	Carole Marchant	Hazel Cook	Bernard Cook

Readers

Coffee

3rd DECEMBER	James Walton / Sheila Warner	Sylvia Scott
10 th	Norman Wood / Kathy Weller	Kathy Weller
17 th	Clare Warren / Lynne Coates	Bernard / Hazel Cook
24 th	TBA	N/A
25 th	Bernard Cook / Chris Evans	N/A
31 st	Sonia Harriyott / Diane Heath	John / Sonia Harriyott

7th JANUARY	Christine House / John Lane	Christine House
14 th	Teresa Lane / John Leng	Teresa Lane
21 st	Coretha McCreery / Ron Ovens	Coretha McCreery
28 th	Doug Scott / Derek Thorogood	Carole Marchant

From Commitment for Life

ZIMBABWE

Commitment for Life has shared many people's stories over the years and it's always great to hear how these stories are progressing. When a United Reformed group visited Nyamapanda in Zimbabwe in 2010 they were greatly impressed by the many income generating groups in the area. Do you remember the stories of the welders, dressmakers, and electricians? The Mayor had asked Silveira House, supported by **Christian Aid**, to help the community find ways to earn a living. The skills learned and the training on HIV and reconciliation had a real effect on the growing township. I recently met up with Aaron Mareya, the programme coordinator for technical vocation and it was good to hear how the businesses were doing seven years on.

Aaron explained that Silveira House withdrew from Nyamapanda in 2012 as all the groups were doing so well and were perfectly capable of running themselves. Trainers go back to check on progress from time to time and offer any ongoing training that is needed. Aaron said that the electricians and plumbers are doing particularly well, with full order books and happy customers. The welders too are still operating, though the dressmakers are struggling because of the influx of second hand clothing from Europe, USA and Mozambique. They used to sell in the local market and had hoped to expand into Mozambique. However, the credit scheme is still working well, giving opportunities to expand and diversify.

Before they stopped working in the area, Silveira House lobbied for the Small and Medium Enterprise Government Ministry Scheme. This means people now have the right to apply for a shop, stall or stand, according to their situation. When they are granted permission for one of these facilities, the plans have already been drawn up and approved, so getting it built is much simpler.

These days, Aaron continues the work of Silveira House in South Matabeleland and this area is also starting to show healthy growth and hope for the future.

BANGLADESH

Forums, set up with the help of The Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh (CCDB) are engaged in a large range of activities. These include food security and marketing activities and the introduction of 'people's managed savings and credit programmes' which have helped women members beyond that possible in previous microcredit programmes

Obtaining fair prices for member's products has also been an achievement of the forums, with value chains having been developed in the production of milk, vermicompost, beef and vegetables.

Forum leaders have been speaking out about the levels of early marriage and domestic violence, and have been organising themselves by advocating for the prohibition and elimination of these practices.

Climate change and disaster risk reduction have also been areas of activity for forums. With saline waters increasingly moving inland, seasonal drought, flooding, cyclones, unseasonably high temperatures during summer, unseasonably low temperatures during winter, and erratic rainfall all causing issues for communities, forum women have been responsible for introducing new crop varieties and technologies to assist their communities. The promotion of solar panels, the introduction of improved cook stoves, and the use of floating bed gardens have all been marked by remarkable success within communities.

Forum members are given training to develop their organisational, financial and leadership skills, and then put in touch with local government and local organisation leaders in order to have a voice and make change happen. The forum takes a leading role in getting community support, preparing business plans, managing the forum's resources (such as land, a pond, or agro-forestry) and looking after the funds for the improvement of livelihood, food security and disaster risk reduction of the forum members.

With CCDB's guidance and where necessary, support, forum members are now motivated and organised. They are getting involved in income generating activities such as cattle, poultry and duck rearing, tailoring, fishing, and environmentally friendly agriculture, with help from loans from the forum's funds. It is expected that gradually the forums will become self-sustaining.

A CHRISTMAS MEDITATION

Risky Travel

There's this new law, so hard, so costly, that we must return to our birthplace to be enrolled on Roman lists.

Here's Mary now, so near her time, going south on stony roads on our old donkey - not a good outlook. Can she bear it?

How shall we go this Christmas?

We must escape from the ruins and all the death of Syria, but where can we go?

Nobody wants us - Lebanon, Turkey, Europe - they just close the door and say 'We're full.'

There's a baby born on the way, to be wrapped and carried and fed.

No angels sing for her; a stable may be the best on offer today.

That's life.

Who hears that cry?

In the Fields

It was a regular job in lambing time to guard the flock through the night. Nothing special, work to be done, but sleepy around the dying fire, with the bright stars and half a moon.

Then the singing and the trumpet call, and that whisper wrapping us like smoke, and a greater light, lightning over Judean hills.

We heard a word, Glory Hallelujah.

This is the night and this is the dawn for the new age has arrived.

Go now. What a dream!

While we were at work, in all the routine, people rushing, bosses huddled in the Board Room, computers glowing, Stock Exchange gloomy, and a bleak outlook for business:

There and then a whisper from beyond?

Nonsense, we hear nothing but keyboards.

Wait. Perhaps, just once, while you are quiet, there is a distant music, a wondering, a hint of something more than wages and overtime. Yes, a great theme that runs through the ages, like sweet river water in the desert.

Glory Hallelujah, the gift of grace has come.

Birthing

Waiting, pain, fearful, pain;
wonder, joy, how lovely;
gently now, such tiny toes;
so soft, so strong in crying.
All hope is there;
new life is our salvation.

For a King

From the east, parts unknown, with a strange language and a little ancient wisdom,
quietly they came to find a king.
The star beckoned, Herod plotted, but they were not to be diverted.
Bowing low they offered gifts, no use to a baby in the straw, but their treasures for a king.
What can we give to God?
Obedience to the primal law? Our first born and first fruits? Worship, praise and frequent prayer?
Give the first step in the morning, the first headline in the paper, the morning kiss from a loved one, and the duty that's right at hand.
Give your longing and your dream, your loss like myrrh and golden love, the frankincense of your desire.

The Powers

Caesar, Herod, Egypt, the whole military establishment, and a little family on the road.
Wealth, savagery, armour, blood on the sand and crosses by the road, and a baby carried with care.
Who can battle the powers that be?
Kremlin, White House and Pentagon, China rising, Google and The Market, the Demographic and Climate Change - they are too much for us.
We hide in our little locations or take a back road off the map.
"But the foolishness of God is wiser than men.
He has chosen things without rank or standing in the world, mere nothings, to overthrow the existing order".
This is the power of faith, hope and love;
that baby will change things for ever.

Bernard Thorogood November '17

(Grateful thanks from the Editor)

Safeguarding Young People and Vulnerable Adults

Many of you attended the training on the 21 October, which is a great reflection of our intention to make sure our church is a safe place, and an acknowledgement of our joint responsibility in this area.

Here is a summary of what to do. Please ask if you have any questions. A copy of this is in the hall and in the church entrance.

Cornerstone Church Safeguarding Reps:

Children: Linda Hallett: lindahallett20@gmail.com, 01825 761124, 07546 980399

Adults: Clare Warren: clare.warren@hotmail.com 01825 766829, 07714 021936

What to do if you witness or suspect abuse of any kind:

Recognise: It could happen

Respond: Do not delay. However, how you respond is very important.

- Do not promise confidentiality. If someone is at risk of harm you will need to tell the correct person.
- Do not investigate or ask leading questions
- Do not make assumptions or judgements
- Do listen
- Do not show shock or disbelief
- Do reassure
- Do tell them what you are going to do
- Only tell those that need to know

Record: As soon as possible afterwards (but not in front of the person), write down a factual account. Include names, date, time and place and what was said or seen as accurately as possible. Sign and date it.

Refer: Tell your safeguarding rep or minister and give them a copy of your report.

If you make a report but still feel unsatisfied then report again. You can also call **NSPCC** for advice on 0808 800500

In cases of immediate danger then call 999 or Social Services.

Children and teens Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm, Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm 01323 464222

Adult Social Care for vulnerable adults socialcaredirect@eastsussex.gov.uk
0345 60 80 191

The Hall and/or the Meeting Room are used by the following regular groups:

- Baby and Toddler group: Wednesdays – 10.00-11.30am
(Wendy Mayhew: 07969 638280)
and Linda Allen: 07411 570070)
- Circuit training group: Tuesdays – 8.00-9.00pm
- Karate Youth: Wednesdays - 5.30-6.30pm
- Mini-Motion: Thursdays – 9.00-10.30am
- Social Services: Wednesdays - 7.00-9.00pm
Sundays - 5.00-9.30pm
- Uckfield Photographic Society: first **and** third Thursdays – 8.00-10.00pm

