***THE AVENUE***

**STANFORD AVENUE**

**METHODIST CHURCH,**

**BRIGHTON**

December 2021 – January 2022

**Minimum Donation 50p**



**THE AVENUE**

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**A Letter from our Minister**

Hello all,

Nothing much from me this time. A mix of a few hectic weeks and not much inspiration has left me bereft of wisdom! I’m sure I’ll find some for the period of Advent and Christmas.

So, I just wanted to take an opportunity to say thank you for all the hard work you do, your commitment and dedication is wonderful to see. Thank you, also, for making me feel so much a part of your family. I’ve been here just over two years, however, it feels like much longer (in a good way) because of how at home you’ve made me feel.

So I’ll wish you all a very happy Christmas and look forward to all that God has for us in 2022!

Grace and Peace,

Dan

Wishing everyone a Happy Christmas with Love & Best Wishes

Jean Griffin.

Martyn & Lis Coblenz wish everyone at Stanford Avenue a Very Happy Christmas and an even better year for 2022.

**LUNCH CLUB CHRISTMAS PARTY.**

An invitation to all Church members, you are all very welcome to join us.

This year’s Christmas lunch will be held in the Church Hall on Wednesday 15th December.

A full roast turkey dinner will be served, or an alternative vegetarian meal can be ordered.

It will be followed by coffee, mince pies, and after dinner mints.

We will then have a short time of Carol Singing (please bring your mask)

 The lunch is free to members of the lunch club but the cost for non-members will be £5.00.

 Lunch will be served at 12.30pm but you are welcome to join us from 12.00 noon.

If you would like to join us, please contact Ann Nealer , 01273 887843 or Christine Hall ,01273 500871 before Monday 6th December.

This will be the last lunch club before Christmas, and we will be back on Wednesday 5th January 2022.

*Martyn – Thanks Christine.*

**John Bell (Iona Community) wrote the following poem during COVID-19**

We will meet when the danger is over

We will meet when the sad days are gone

We will meet sitting closely together

And be glad our tomorrow has come

We will join and give thanks and sing gladly

We will join to break bread and share wine

And the peace we pass to each other

Will be more than a casual sign

So let’s make with each other a promise

When all we’ve come though is behind

We will share what we missed and find meaning

In the things that once troubled our mind

**SHOE BOXES**

A big thank you to all who contributed in any way towards this appeal. There were 16 boxes this year, and I managed to find my way, with the help of a Sat Nav, to the Link to Hope warehouse, which has now moved to Ferring, having previously been in Worthing.

In due course I expect to receive an official thank you, which I will display on the notice board for all to see.

**WORLD BOXES**

The end of December is the time for these collection boxes to be emptied – in fact, it is somewhat overdue as I forgot to ask for them at the end of June.

The boxes can either be brought to church so that I Can empty them, or if you would rather send a cheque to me, made payable to Stanford Avenue Methodist Church with World Box on the back, which will be fine.

I look forward to receiving your contributions in the next few weeks.

**GIRL’S BRIGADE**

We returned to brigade during September and have had a small group of girls attending regularly. We have had one new young lady join us, but if you know of **any** girls 5 years or older that enjoy playing games, doing craft, and learning life skills please suggest that they join us on a Wednesday evening. We are in the hall from 6.15 p.m. We would love to see them. We all join in wishing everyone a Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year. Lis, Karen, Sam & Amy

*Martyn – Thankyou Amy and keep up the good work.*

**ACTION FOR CHILDREN NEWS and EVENTS**

Hello, some news and dates for your diary .

As you know Margaret Tregenza  has been doing a sterling job as the Stanford Avenue  Action for Children representative for many years, I am now going to share that responsibility working closely with Margaret  to support Action for Children. My name is Gaynor Paul. I am a member of the church and have been a regular  supporter of Action for Children . My background is Nursing and Nurse education, including children’s nursing, Maureen Faulkner was actually my nurse tutor at the children's hospital many years ago. I am now the main carer for my mum Pam.

I am delighted to work alongside Margaret learning the ropes! and  will be taking over box and donation collections, following her excellent programme of events with a few changes.

I don't have a garden like Margaret’s so we may need to rethink the famous and very popular garden party!

Contact Gaynor Paul

2 Belton Road Brighton BN2 3RE

Mobile 07733488959, Landline 01273 242780

email [gaynor.paul1@gmail.com](mailto:gaynor.paul1@gmail.com).

**A MESSAGE FROM PHIL CODLING.**

Back in May 2021 I managed to stand up for the first time after nearly 3 months in a hospital bed. That first stand, with all the pain/wobbles/dizziness, was the first part of my journey to getting back on my feet.  
  
Since then I have conquered the dizziness, worked out how to stand up/sit down independently, get about with a wheelchair, then with a walking frame, walk using crutches and now I walk un-aided although still with a bit of a limp.  
  
My breathing has improved greatly during the summer months and the continual coughing has subsided which is a relief to the rest of the family.  
  
Thanks to all the help from the physios and occupational therapists at Tunbridge Wells hospital things are getting back to normal.  
  
I’m now back at work on reduced hours and hopefully will be back full-time in the new year.  
  
I’ve had loads of prayers and support from friends and family across the country so wanted to take this opportunity to say thank you to you all.  
  
Thanks   
  
Phil

*Martyn – It’s good to hear that you are making good progress Phil.*

**CHRISTMAS STORIES**

**Joy to the Mall**

**Luke 2 for the 21st Century**And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from the Chancellor of the Exchequer that all of Britain should go shopping. The decree was first made when leading economic indicators dipped to their lowest point. All went out to shop – each to his own shopping mall.

And a Christian also went up from his suburban home to the city with its many shops because he wanted to prove that he was from the household of prosperity. And with him was his wife who was great with economic worry.

And so, it was while they were there, they found many expensive presents- and the woman charged these to many different plastic cards. She wrapped the presents in bright paper and laid them in the garage, for there was no room for them in her bedroom.

There were in that same country, children watching over their stockings by night. And lo, Father Christmas came upon them, and they were sore afraid (expecting to see the special effects they had seen at the pictures.).

And Father Christmas said to them:

”*Fear not for behold I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people who can afford this holiday. For unto you will be given this day, in your suburban home, great feasts of turkey and Christmas pudding and cake…and many presents. And this shall be a sign to you: you shall find the presents wrapped in bright paper, lying beneath the Christmas tree which is decorated with tinsel, coloured balls and lights.*

*And suddenly there was with Father Christmas, a multitude of relatives and friends, praising one another and saying, “Glory to you for getting me this gift: it’s just what I wanted”*

And it came to pass, as the relatives went back to their homes, the parents said to one another:

“I’m glad that’s over. What a mess! I’m too tired to clean up. Let’s go to bed and clear it tomorrow.”

And when they said this, they remembered the things that had been told them by the shopkeepers: “Christmas comes but once a year” and they wondered at those things that were sold to them by the shopkeepers.

But the children treasured all their things in their hearts, hoarding their toys from each other. And the parents , after a drink, went to bed, glorifying and praising each other for all the bargains they had found in the shopping malls.

*Adapted from script by Chris Dolson, Pastor of Shreveport Bible Church Louisiana ,USA.*

**The following has been provided by Lorna Taylor (Coblenz) when she asked her two children a number of questions.**

Lyla Taylor, age 3 (2019)

What’s your name? Lyla

How old are you? 3

How old is mum? 4

What’s your favourite colour? Yellow

What’s your favourite food? Broccoli!!!!!

Who’s your best friend? Lola, Chloe, Hattie, Sofia, Cara and Etta

What’s your favourite song? Greatest showman

What do you like to watch? Bing

What’s your favourite animal? Pig

What makes you happy? When Etta loves me

Where’s your favourite place to go? Playgroup

What do you want to be when you grow up? A fairy and a princess

Who loves you the most? Etta

What does mummy do all day? Dust!!!

What are you scared of? Monsters

Where does money come from? Postman

Where do you live? Here

Where did you come from? Father Christmas

What's your favourite number? 1 and a 3

Etta Taylor, age 3 (2021)

What’s your name? Etta

How old are you? 3

How old is mum? 4

What’s your favourite colour? Pink

What’s your favourite food? Carrot

Who’s your best friend? Mimi

What’s your favourite song? Shut up and dance with me

What do you like to watch? BFG

What’s your favourite animal? Cow

What makes you happy? Rapunzel

Where’s your favourite place to go? playgroup

What do you want to be when you grow up? A big girl

Who loves you the most? Mummy

What does mummy do all day? Work

What are you scared of? Giants

Where does money come from? The shop

Where do you live? At our house

Where did you come from? From Ivy

What's your favourite number? 4

*Martyn – So cute even if they are my grandchildren*

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**New Hire at the Church.**

I'd like to introduce myself, not that I need introducing to most of you. I'm Matthew and have been running fitness classes in the church hall for about five years. My company Dancefloor Activist has maintained regular classes at the hall whilst other sessions have come and gone. This is in part due to the close relationships I have with the members of the church. I've hired many church, synagogue and private studios over the past 10 years, but Stanford Avenue Methodist Church is the first venue that has made me feel part of the community.

Next year, I'm looking to rebrand my company with a new name 'Matthew Black Fitness' with new activities alongside dance. I'm registering as a Community Interest Company in the hope to run sessions specifically for communities in Brighton and Fiveways that struggle to access group classes. Alongside my work as a fitness instructor I'm also a director of Murmuration Arts, a participatory arts organisation, delivering community engagement projects. My wife Marion is the Artistic Director of the company and has moved her office into Room 4. We are really excited to have this new space to work and have already made hires to run virtual tea dances and rehearsals for our new project called 'Nightlight Lullabies'. You can find out more at [www.murmurationarts.co.uk](http://www.murmurationarts.co.uk)

When working in theatre and fitness, my aim is to bring people together, through shared experiences that create a space for everyone to gain from the benefits of social engagement, moving their bodies and expressing themselves.

**MEDITATION & MUSIC.**

Meditation & Music meets every 3rd Wednesday of the month in the Church at 19-30 pm. At the next meeting on 15th December there will be a discussion as to whether to meet in the afternoons instead of the evenings. For further details please speak to Sylvia Lord.

Best wishes Sylvia Lord.

**THE HAM SANDWICH**

A Jewish Rabbi and a Catholic Priest, good friends, were having a picnic. The Priest, munching his ham sandwich, said to the Rabbi, “You know, this ham sandwich is really delicious. You Jews don’t eat pig, I know, but when are you going to relent and try some?

‘When I attend your wedding,’ said the Rabbi.

**CHURCH FAMILY NEWS**

We continue to pray for June Lawson,

Nadine & Gary Pugh, Ann Collins,

John Pollard (Vic & Margaret’s Son), Sylvia & Ray Smith, Debbie Johnson, Jean Griffin, Doug Butler.

Liz Wakeling & Amy Codling (Leaders of Scouts & Girls’ Brigade), Phil Codling, Maureen Knell, Sheila Whyte, Syd Beck, Jean & Geoff Starks and Gill & Shirley Challen.

As always, please let me know if you want me to remove any names, add to them or update us with news of any of the above.

We of course continue to pray for our Circuit staff as they minister to us – namely – Revd’s Andy Lowe, Deborah Cornish, Dan Woodhouse, Heather Leake Date, Major Connie Croly, Sue Harrington, and all our Lay Workers and Local Preachers.

**A piece of paper with writing

Description automatically generated with medium confidence**

*Martyn – Thanks for his Ann.*

**Dealing with Grief.**

**By Dave Taylor.**

I thought that it would be good to share my story of how being a part of this church family helped me deal with losing my Dad.

My Dad’s diagnosis with cancer is quite synonymous with my experience of our church because he was diagnosed in October 2012 shortly after I met Lorna and not long before I visited Stanford Avenue for the first time.

Luckily, he visited the church a couple of times, once for a Christmas service which he was very taken with.

By the time my Dad passed away in May 2014 the church had become more important to me and prayer helped me cope with the feelings that I was going through.

I had some counselling sessions through work, and this also helped but I still felt like I needed to turn to someone else, someone that was kind of independent, not a family member but someone that I knew would listen and maybe offer some advice.

That person was Geoffrey Harrington, I arranged to meet Geoff one evening after work and I can’t really recall what we discussed too much but I just sort of wanted to ask him what to do, to deal with losing my Dad and to get through the grief that I was feeling.

We chatted over a pint of something, (probably lemonade???) and I remember feeling that as well as what Geoff said, the fact that he had taken time out of his day to talk to me about a difficult subject was what I really appreciated. I felt being a member of the church family I could call on him like I would a member of my own family for help and even if I had asked to meet once a week he would have agreed and that meant a lot.

Personally, I have never found any peace of mind or comfort from visiting my Dad’s grave, this is fortunate really because the church is in a village called Napton in the midlands where my Dad grew up (and close to where I grew up). I find more peace and feel closer to him when I am doing something that I remember him by.

This may sound strange but one of those things is swimming in the sea! My Dad used to take me on holiday to a place called Perranporth in Cornwall every year when I was a kid and he absolutely loved being in the sea, so every time I swim in the sea, I feel close to him.

Every time Christmas approaches, and I am in or near the church I also remember the service that he came to and again I feel close to him.

Losing my Dad was the hardest thing that I have ever had to come to terms with and there are times when even being in the church is painful, times such as father’s day for instance.

I have some amazing memories of this church including being married to Lorna and the christenings of our daughters Lyla and Etta.

I feel very grateful that I am in this church family and have been able to call for help from Geoff at a time when I really needed it.

Knowing that I am feeling that pain with others and that I can talk to people within the church is what counts and these are the things that I appreciate most about being a part of Stanford Avenue.

I don’t expect that any one person’s grief will be the same as someone else. I certainly didn’t expect to find more comfort in swimming in the sea than attending a grave to feel close to my Dad and each person probably has their own coping mechanisms, but I do believe that talking about things will help anyone no matter what their experience of grief is like.

I would like the opportunity to help too so if anyone wants to chat about their own experiences with grief or just someone to talk to please get in touch, email is [davidjamestaylor@live.co.uk](mailto:davidjamestaylor@live.co.uk).

**J.M.A CHRISTMAS BOX.**

**This year we are will be having our Christmas post box for JMA**

**It will be out from the 28th Nov (first Sunday of advent ) and be distributed on the 19th Dec.**

**Please remember this is 'in house only'.**

**Any cheques to be made payable to Stanford Avenue Church.**

**Please put them in alphabetical order of surname.**

**Many thanks**

**Robert and Jeni**

**LIFE AS A REDCOAT.**

**Part 5 -** CHANGE OF COLOUR FROM RED to BLUE.

On a cold late April day I set off for the train journey to Westward Ho! North Devon. I’d never been to that area before and had no idea what the Holiday camp would be like. I’d packed lots of sheet music as instructed by Ken, as the Bluecoat Team were to be the main entertainers because it was a much smaller camp. Butlin’s had accommodation for fifteen and a half thousand guests, but Westward Ho held about eight and a half thousand.

I was met at the station and travelled to the Camp in their private minibus. Ken who had been an assistant Entertainer Manager at Butlin’s greeted me now as the Entertainment Manager.

There were only eight Bluecoats, plus a Children’s Aunt and Uncle. At our first meeting Ken informed us that the Children’s Aunt and Uncle would not be coming! So, he then said, “We thought Wynn, that you could do it”. That took my breath away, but I said that if I could do my own programme and finish at 9-30 pm instead of midnight when the team would finish. I’d have a go for a couple of weeks”. That was agreed. Next day I was given a key to THE KINGSLEY CLUB a building where I would work. The next few days I persuaded the Chief carpenter to make me a board made of Peg Board to put on the back wall of the platform. I’d decided I’d place the children in teams & use coloured pegs that I could move up or down ladders as they scored points in various activities. They could come down the ladders if they caused trouble !!. We found a box containing small badges with a cute budgie on it, so I decided to name the Club – THE BUDGE CLUB. So for the following few days before the guests were due to arrive, I began to think of the Children’s Programme pinching a few ideas from what I’d seen at BUTLINS !!. To my surprise I found I was enjoying myself.

**Next Time: The Children Arrive!**

**FUNDRAISING UPDATE.**

Martyn kindly waited to produce the magazine until we had the Christmas & Craft fair on 27th November so we could let you know all about the day. It was extremely cold with storm Arwen blasting the front of the Church providing plenty of ventilation! With the gazebo for the BBQ and the stall holders set up and ready we opened the doors at 11-00 am and has a steady stream of visitors until the end. So many commented on the lovely atmosphere created. Our visiting “Crafters” included the Community Garden ladies, The Preston WI, Bodyshop and Flamingo cards representatives and lot of crafty people. They all said they’d had a great day and will come again. Including these stall holders table fees, donations and cake sale after Church the next day the final total was £1500.90. A truly amazing amount. Thank you to everyone who helped achieve this fantastic total. What a great team we are.

There won’t be any events for December & January, but we are already planning a Quiz night, a flower pot sculpture festival and Spring fair, so keep your eyes open for details of these.

A little plea? If you receive any unwanted gifts (don’t worry we won’t tell anyone) and gift bags, we would be grateful for the.

If you have any ideas for fundraising events, please let us know.

We wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a wonderful New Year.

From your fundraising team, Karen, Amy, Jeni, Mags Liz, Pete and Lis.

*Martyn – What a fantastic effort and keep up the good work all of you.*

**CHRISTMAS MINCEMEAT SLICES.**

(Makes 12 – 16)

5oz Butter or margarine

3oz Soft brown sugar

8oz Wholemeal flour

4oz Porridge oats

Half lb mincemeat

Grease a shallow baking tin 11” x 7” (Swiss Roll Tin)

Pre-heat oven to Gas 6 – 400 degrees F

Melt butter or Marg in a large saucepan together with brown sugar. Mix together flour and oats in a bowl

When butter and sugar are liquid, stir well and add flour & oats mixture to pan, stirring all the time.

When mixed, spoon half the mixture into the tin using flat of your hand to press down firmly.

Spread mincemeat over the top, then spoon the remaining mixture over it. Again pressing down firmly.

Cook in the centre of the oven for about 20 mins or until brown. Remove from oven & cut with a sharp knife into 12 – 16 pieces. Leave in tin until cold.

*Martyn – Thanks Lis, looking forward to have this at home.*

**7th Brighton Scouts**

Hi Everyone .

Our current numbers are fairly constant with around 18 Cubs & 10 – 12 Scouts. There will be a number of cubs going up into Scouts during January.

We are holding our Christmas Carol Service on 7th Dec in the Hall with Rev Dan Woodhouse and our last meeting before Christmas is 14th December. We will return from the break on 11th January.

We are also going to be Camping Indoors at Park Wood from January 21st – 23rd.

8 of our Cubs have gained their Silver Award during the lockdown period and will be going to the Mayors Parlour to receive them on 7th February.

May we wish everyone in the Church a Very Happy Christmas & a super New Year,

Thank you for your continued support.

Liz Wakeling

*Martyn – You are obviously doing the right thing with all those numbers.*

**Contributions Needed.**

I have only received contributions for the magazine from the usual two of three people. This is your Church magazine, and it would be really nice to have more people making the effort to put something in. It could be about Hobby, Craft, Special Holiday, Puzzles etc. So please come on and let me have something or it may not be possible to produce them into the future. Please, please help out and scribble something down.

Please send them to the [stanfordmethodist@btconnect.com](about:blank) or drop them through the Church letterbox.

We now have someone who has kindly agreed to producing a Newsletter. Mel Gilham will be producing it Bi-Weekly and the 1st one went out on Friday 26th November. If you would like to receive a copy, please let Mel know by emailing her at [melbe10@me.com](mailto:melbe10@me.com).

**PAUSE FOR THOUGHT**

By the time you read this it will be Advent. At the end of September a TV station began to show Christmas films 24 hours a day. I saw Christmas cards on sale at the beginning of August.

In my paper 2 weeks ago on the letters page there was a “debate” piece with 8 letters headed HOW WE LOST THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS ? TV adverts for food, gifts, drinks. One letter published many adverts giving the impression that the festival is all about mince pies, gifting, snowfall and fairy lights. A couple more mentioned the adverts showing Father Christmas as the central character at Christmas. The last letter said, “What happened to celebrating the Birth of Jesus Christ?” Surely, we’d want to share our spiritual nature at this time of year, not the worship of material comforts.

I had to go to the Cancer Unit at the RSCH a few days ago to have a drug administered to hopefully stop the Cancer returning. It only took 15 minutes. I looked around most of the patients there having chemo therapy treatment taking 6 to 8 hours to administer. They would be on it for quite a while, I on the other hand have to go every 6 months for 5 years. Many people will be in hospital over the festive season. Visiting is still limited.

In 1996/97 I was in hospital for 3 months following my RTA on 3rd December. It was a very strange Christmas Day, the highlight was when my young niece and nephew sang Christmas Carols to us, making us all shed tears. The staff were amazing. The doctors and nurses, the carers in Care Homes, Hospices, etc will be on duty throughout the festive season. Many people will have an empty chair this Christmas as they mourn the loss of a loved one. Lots of prayers needed.

We will probably sing the carol “Cradled in a Manger” sometime this Christmas. The last verse.

AND TO THOSE WHO NEVER LISTENED

TO THE MESSAGE OF THY BIRTH

WHO HAVE WINTER, BUT NO CHRISTMAS

BRINGING THEM THY PEACE OF EARTH

SEND TO THESE THE JOYFUL TIDINGS

BY ALL PEOPLE, IN EACH HOME

BE THERE HEARD THE CHRISTMAS ANTHEM

PRAISE TO GOD, THE CHRIST HAS COME.

So it’s over to us!

May you have a very blessed Christmas and a Happy Healthy and Blessed 2022.

Wyn.

*Martyn – Thanks for these words at a very special time of the year.*



**Services at Stanford Avenue & Dates for your Diary**

Sunday 19th December Stanford Avenue Carol Concert  6:30 pm : Collection for Action for Children.

Saturday 19th February 2022  Stanford Avenue  2pm : Brighton Male Voice Choir ; A Concert In Aid Of Action For Children .

Light refreshments will be available !  Come along, enjoy the singing and support Action for Children.

5th December – Mrs Beulah Fletcher

12th December – Mr Geoff Harrington

19th December – Mr Paul Steadman

24th December – NO SERVICE

25th December – Rev Dan Woodhouse (10-00am)

26th December – NO SERVICE

**2022**

2nd January – Mr Ken Smith

9th January – Rev Dan Woodhouse (Covenant)

16th January – Mrs Cynthia Tudor

23rd January – Major Connie Croly

30th January – Mr Bob Hinton

6th February – Circuit Together Service @ Patcham

13th February – Rev Dan Woodhouse

20th February – Major Connie Croly

27th February – Rev John Jennings

**LAST DAY for FEBRUARY – MARCH 2021 magazine contributions will be**

**MONDAY 24th JANUARY.**

You will be able to send contributions via E-Mail: [stanfordmethodist@btconnect.com](about:blank), or, by post to Stanford Avenue Church with ‘For Magazine’ on the front of the envelope.



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**WISHING EVERYONE A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS & PEACEFUL NEW YEAR**