|  |
| --- |
|  |
| ALLERTON  CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH |



December 2021/January 2022 Newsletter

Dear Friends

Amongst all the Advent and Christmas carols that we know and love there are a few that rarely get a mention. One of those that seems to have gone out of favour is ‘Love came down at Christmas’, which was written by Christina Georgina Rossetti in the 19th Century. Unlike many of the popular carols and hymns the focus is not so much on the historical events of the first Christmas, but rather on the theological significance and meaning of Jesus coming to Earth.

 In three short verses Rossetti manages to sum up the way in which God’s love is demonstrated, experienced and shared in and through Jesus Christ. Here is the carol:

1 Love came down at Christmas,

love all lovely, Love divine;

Love was born at Christmas;

star and angels gave the sign.

 2 Worship we the Godhead,

Love incarnate, Love divine;

worship we our Jesus,

but wherewith for sacred sign?

 3 Love shall be our token;

love be yours and love be mine;

love to God and others,

love for plea and gift and sign.

 Firstly, God demonstrates His love for us by sending His only Son to dwell amongst us. To quote the Apostle Paul, “God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8, ESV)

Jesus came not just to tell us about the Father’s love for us, but to embody that love by dying on the cross in our place. Truly love came down at Christmas!

 Secondly, the carol tells us of how human beings experienced God’s love at that first Christmas. Through the witness of angels and the star of Bethlehem shepherds and magi were led to the new-born baby, Jesus. They saw Him in His humility and frailty and yet God still revealed Himself to them so that they worshipped Him. We also experience God’s love for us through Scripture, and through God’s grace and mercy towards us. Even though we deserve nothing from God He has revealed Himself to us and offered the way to eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ.

 Thirdly, Rossetti’s carol points us towards the fruit of the Christian life. The love of God is not simply something to be seen and enjoyed by us, but it is to be shared. We are to love God, love our neighbour and even love our enemies. “Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, ‘Where I am going you cannot come.’ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:33-35, ESV)

 As Jesus was preparing for His death at Calvary, which He knew would be followed by His resurrection and ascension, He was preparing His disciples for their life and ministry afterwards. This new life, in which we also share, is to be marked by love: love for one another in Christ.

Yes, we are also to love those who are not yet believers, so that they may hear and receive the saving Gospel message. Remember, though, that true love is not a sentimental acceptance of the status quo, but rather it is wanting the very best for others – eternal life through faith in Jesus.

Love is also mentioned by the Apostle Paul as one part of the fruit of the Spirit. “the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.” (Galatians 5:22-24, ESV) Love is part of the package deal that God’s Holy Spirit develops within us, and it will increasingly become evident in every aspect of our lives.

 So this Christmas, may we all recognise how God has demonstrated His love for us in Jesus. May we experience the great love of God afresh as we hear the familiar Bible readings and sing the familiar carols. May we also share God’s amazing love with one another, and with our unbelieving friends and family members that they may experience God’s love for themselves for all eternity. Through doing these things we are also showing our love for God, who is the author of true Love!

May I end by wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Yours, Fred.



 !

!"

##

 



$!#

"%& '(

)

\*



+$,

"

' -

.

/0

Secretary’s Thoughts





 !

!"

##

 



$!#

"%& '(

)

\*



+$,

"

' -

.

/0

Secretary’s Thoughts





 !

!"

##

 



$!#

"%& '(

)

\*



+$,

"

' -

.

/0

Secretary’s Thoughts





 !

!"

##

 



$!#

"%& '(

)

\*



+$,

"

' -

.

/0

Secretary’s Thoughts





 !

!"

##

 



$!#

"%& '(

)

\*



+$,

"

' -

.

/0

Secretary’s Thoughts

As we prepare for Christmas, I just wonder where the last year has gone - our lives have become very different, with rules and restrictions and a lot of confusion.

Nevertheless, we are here preparing for another Christmas, looking forward to the familiar readings and carols. My hope is that we will have a “normal” Christmas, spending time with family and friends wherever possible.

As we move forward into 2022, we need to remember the true meaning of Christmas and to share the love of Jesus with all we meet.

By the time you read this newsletter, we will have a new boiler in the kitchen so we should be free from drips and leaks.

I will put a list for your favourite carols on the table in the hall, so that you can put in your requests for the Carol Service on 12th December.

A very happy Christmas to you all.

Janet

Shirley Copley

We have heard from Richard Copley of the passing of his mother, Shirley, on Wednesday 17th November in Airedale Hospital. In his email he makes the following comment:

“You will know how important Allerton Congs was to her, from her childhood right up to her move to Bingley. She loved to talk of the older days at the church, and especially the special week-long series of events held every year when she was younger. Later, she really enjoyed introducing her grandchildren to the church, and I know that their time with Gran at Allerton Congs is part of their happy memories. She valued the friendships she made at the church, so thanks to you all for being an important part of her long and happy life.”

Shirley’s funeral will take place at Nab Wood Crematorium on Tuesday 7th December at 10.40 am, with nibbles afterwards.

Finance Committee – A message from the Financial Secretary

The Finance Committee has been very busy in the five weeks since the Members Meeting on 17 October 2021. Various items from the list of works read by David Muschamp at the Meeting have been actioned or completed.

A replacement water boiler has been purchased and installed in the kitchen and available for use from 15 November 2021.

There has been 200 mm (8” in old money) of thermal insulation installed in the roof void above the meeting room behind the stage. This has been completed at a lower cost than that reported at the meeting, a reduction or around 40% by seeking better quotations.

An order has been placed for 4 new upvc windows to be installed in the meeting room behind the stage. The timing of this work is now just dependant on the manufacture of the new windows, but hopefully before Christmas. Two comparable quotations have been obtained for this work. Unfortunately, the cost of this work has increased but falls within the new delegated financial authority.

A quotation received to simply clean the worst of the mould-stained walls has not been taken forward and more extensive works are now likely to be considered.

A large set of step ladders, now deemed surplus to requirements and in the way, are to be disposed of. These are to be given away and so removal and disposal will be at no cost to the Church.

Other items on the list are also being progressed and further update will follow. If any Member has any questions, please ask Chris Ing or any member of the Finance Committee.

C.N. Ing – 22 November 2021.



Dates for your Diary

Thursday 13th January - 10.00 am Deacons Meeting

Tuesday 18th January – 10.00 am Finance Committee

Flower Rota – flowers provided by:

Sunday 9th Jan Mr & Mrs B Haley

16th Jan Mrs North

On Sundays not listed, silk flowers will be used.

Preaching list for December and January

Sunday 5th Dec Fred Rich – Communion

12th Dec Carol Service – David & Janet

19th Dec Fred Rich

Christmas Day Trevor Hippey

Sunday 2nd Jan David Muschamp - Communion

9th Jan Fred Rich

16th Jan David Robinson

23rd Jan Trevor Kershaw

30th Jan Fred Rich

Coffee Rota

As we have returned to having coffee after services, it would be really helpful if those on the rota could come a little earlier to set things up. You will not need to bring milk.

The coffee rota is on the notice board in the vestibule and will be on the table in the hall on Sundays.

Bible Reading Rota

If you would like to offer to read the Bible for Sunday services, the Bible reading rota is on the notice board in the vestibule and will be on the table in the hall on Sundays.

Note from the Editor

The next newsletter is due on 30th January – please let me have any items for inclusion by 23rd January.

Thank you – David



Website: allertoncongregationalchurch.org.uk

** facebook.com/allertoncongregationalchurchi**