

December 2025-  
January 2026



# Central United Reformed Church Derby Magazine

Stuart House Green Lane, Derby DE1 1RS

Tel: 01332 346627

[www.derbycentralurc.net](http://www.derbycentralurc.net)

## Lessons from a Christmas tree



- Be a light in the darkness.
- It's okay to fall over sometimes.
- Bring joy to those around you.
- Sparkle and twinkle whenever you can.
- And remember, it's perfectly fine to be a little tilted.



Dear Friends

So, we have almost reached the end of another year at Central. I think you will again agree we have had a busy time with lots of interesting events.

Cinema at Central afternoons have raised over £987.10, with friends from outside the church joining us and having fun, even those who didn't like dancing!

The 3Fs celebrated their 15th anniversary in July. A very successful morning ended with one of John's masterful, special cakes. We are grateful for all the organisations who help to make the group work. Later that month Monday Fellowship ended their year with a delicious afternoon tea; the cakes didn't help the waistline, but Penny, Rev Kevin's labrador had a lovely time!

In September we had to undergo our first quinquennial survey -5 years after we moved in! A comprehensive document which showed mostly we are looking after our building very well. We are grateful to Stuart who is slowly working his way through the small problems which were discovered. As every homeowner knows, there is always a cost to running a building.

Sadly, Reeds in Partnership moved to larger premises in March leaving the second floor empty. We hope a new tenant will be found soon. Derby City Life links are still using part of the 3rd floor; in September, we presented them with a cheque for £1.772 from our POTS collection to enable their charity for Mental Health

and Vox Feminarum now rent the downstairs space. Their sign MOSAICC leads people to a shop which distributes food to needy families and works with survivors of abuse.

U3A have over 12 different groups using our meeting rooms over the month.

Derby Inclusive Fellowship now meet in the sanctuary twice a month and have unveiled a new banner showing their logo, crocheted by Tracey which now hangs on the church wall.

The new student flats are now occupied and we are glad that our joint security gates give them protection as well as us.

Our brand-new signs are in place which advertise our activities including our Friday Coffee morning where they are welcomed in by our Duty Managers.

We still have new people coming to worship on Sunday mornings who enjoy the wide variety of services we offer and the warm welcome they receive. We are so grateful for all who prepare and lead our services each week. During the year we welcomed Rev Peter Little into membership, transferring from the Birmingham area, and then later in August we welcomed Michael Watkinson into membership. Already his technical skills have been very useful, especially in using our church technology, which is quite beyond me.

Thanks must go to Helen Jones who keeps us connected to the other 4 churches via the South West Derbyshire Area Partnership

Facebook page; Matty and Sam who update our profile on social media and Barrie who keeps our website updated.

We were very sad that Rev Kevin's health deteriorated during the Autumn and he has needed to take some time off. We continue to pray that he will soon recover and be able to join us again soon.

As we come to the end of the year, I want to thank everyone who has helped us during the year. Your efforts, small or big have been valued. We remember also to give thanks for our housebound members and friends who also contribute to our fellowship.

I wish you all a peaceful Christmas and good tidings to all.

As Tiny Tim quotes in Dickens' A Christmas Carol' "God bless us everyone".

Christine



Central URC, Derby



DerbycentralURC



[www.derbycentralurc.net](http://www.derbycentralurc.net)





May the light of Christmas  
fill your heart with  
endless hope, love, and joy



*"Close the door of hate  
and open the door of  
love all over the  
world."*

*~ By Robert Louis Stevenson*

## Links with Becket School

Over the last 3 years since Matty began his teaching at Becket School, we have been lucky to begin to build links with the school. It began as a meeting of Rev Judith and Ellen, the minister at The Baptist Church at the top of Green Lane. Then when Judith left, Ellen met Jill and myself in the early days of our move to Stuart House. Sam and Matty had spent time with Ellen when they explored with her how to get her congregation more open to LGBT thinking. Co-incidentally, Ellen was at the time, the chaplain to the school. As their church was out of commission during the week, used by Upbeat Communities, she felt Central was an ideal place to show the children what a church was like. We had our first visit from Becket School when the reception class visited in September 2022. Ellen took the lead and we taught a couple of songs and provided drinks and biscuits.

Meanwhile, Matty joined the staff and tentatively suggested I might like to come into school in the run up to Christmas and teach some Christmas music to the Key Stage 2 children. Their piano was rarely played and it would be good for the children. I have to say, I didn't need much persuading.....and what a delight. The children are lovely, uncomplicated, well behaved and enthusiastic.

3 years later and 3 Christmas visits later, it has become an established part of their school life and our church life that years 4,5 or 6 visit Central in early December.

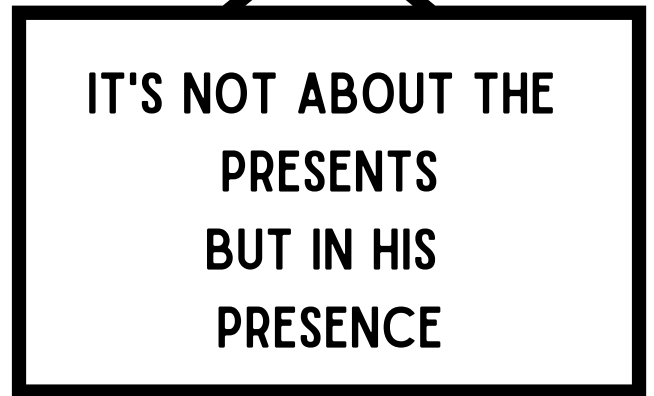
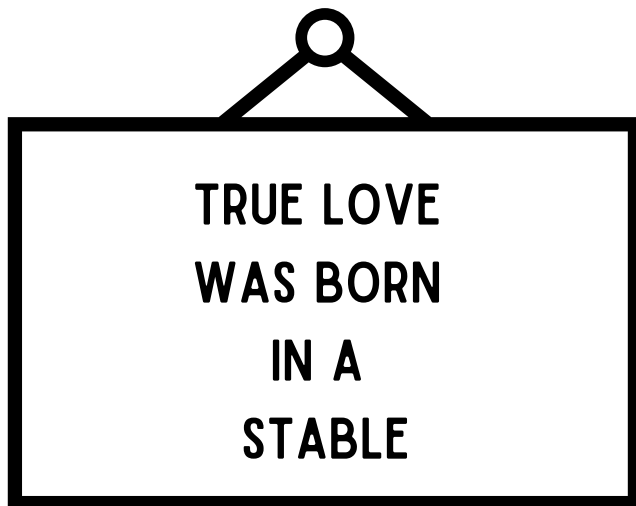
Meanwhile, when Ellen decided to retire, Matty thought it would be a perfect opportunity to suggest our Terry to replace her. This idea was welcomed with open arms and we are very thrilled that Terry goes in for an hour on Tuesday lunch times running a 'Values club' which is very well received.

What prompted me to write this article was my first visit of the year last Tuesday. We were learning a new carol and revisiting one we learned last year. We were joined by year 3 children (7/8 year olds), whom I met for the first time. On the front row were 2 very 'enthusiastic' singers-loud, tuneless with huge smiles on their faces who had to be 'gently' reminded that we were trying to sing sweetly. This didn't have much effect!!! I was reminded of the bible verse "unless you become as a little child, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven".

In this broken, troubled world of ours, we thank you for our children, especially in our local schools where many, many different countries and religions come together under one roof; for their teachers, often from different nationalities themselves and for the opportunity to show them that God loves us all.

Cathy

## Some funny Church signs





# SCAMS

We need to look out for scams by email, which are increasing. As ever, they will be plausible, and the advice is not to click on any links and certainly not to hand over any money. Email scams will often be unexpected, probably won't address you by name, and may pressurise you with a false sense of urgency, or ask you to provide information. But one tell-tale feature from in the past is not so reliable these days – poor spelling and punctuation used to be an indicator of scam emails but unfortunately AI is helping scammers to get better at these things. You can report scam emails by forwarding them to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk)

We also warn about SCAM LETTERS, that are using the traditional method of paper! Yes, postal scams do exist – mostly promising fraudulent health cures, fortune telling, non-existent prizes, etc – all trying hard to part you from your money. Often with impressive looking notepaper, so please don't be taken in. These can be reported just like scam emails can. You simply pop them into an envelope, and address it to: FREEPOST NTSST MAIL MARSHALS and post it off (absolutely free – no stamp!) NTSST stands for National Trading Standards Scam Team. And of course, please don't reply to the scammers. Lastly, just a reminder of these helpful numbers: 159 – to contact your bank about possible fraud 0808 223 1133 – for Citizens' Advice

# CINEMA AT CENTRAL

' This November, Cinema at Central opened its doors again for a Christmassy showing of 'Home Alone'. To set the scene, the first floor was transformed with Christmas decorations, mulled wine and mince pies were enjoyed throughout the film. Thank you so much for everyone who came to watch the film and thank you to the Cinema at Central team for organising the event. We are very pleased to announce that we raised £307.50 for church funds.

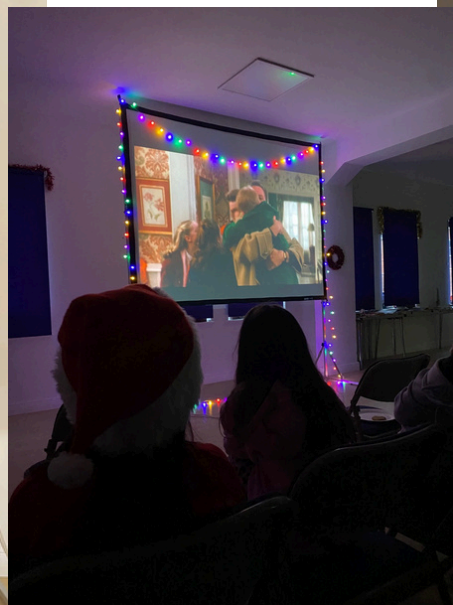
Join us again on Saturday 11th April for our Grease event! More details to follow in the new year.'

Let me know if you need anything else!

Thank you,  
Jess







# CENTRAL SPOTLIGHT

1. How long have you been coming to Central?
2. What first brought you to Central ?
3. Can you share a special memory of church?
4. What is your favourite hymn or worship song?
5. What is your favourite Bible verse?
6. Do you have a hobby or interest?
7. What is your favourite book?
8. What's your favourite song (none church) ?
9. What is your favourite film or tv show ?
10. If you could travel any where in the world where would you go?
11. What is your favourite food?
12. What's one thing that people might be surprised to know about you?
13. What's one thing you're passionate about?
14. Do you prefer Christmas or Easter and why?
15. Anything else you want to tell us about yourself ?

Want to answer these questions and appear next time  
send in your answers to Christine



1. 71 years
  2. Baptised on 26.12.1954
  3. Sunday school, choir
  4. Brother Sister let me serve you
  5. 23rd Psalm
  6. Art, craft and cooking
  7. Heidi
  8. Handyman. started my love of James Taylor
  9. Anything musical, Les Mis
  10. Australia
  11. I Love a traditional roast, but I like everything  
hence I'm DIETING!
  12. I used to have a guest house in Torquay
  13. MY FAMILY!
  14. Neither, I like both
  15. As a child I was SHY!
- Gill Barling





Q: What does Santa use to measure?

A: Santameters!



Q: Where do snowmen go dancing?

A: A snowball!



Q: What does the gingerbread man put on his bed?

A: Cookie sheets!



Q: What do you get if you cross an apple with a Christmas Tree?

A: A pineapple!



Q: Where does a snowman keep his money?

A: In a snowbank!



Q: What do road crews use at the North Pole?

A: Snow cones!



Q: What happens if you eat Christmas decorations?

A: You get tinselitus!



Q: What do you call Santa when he stops moving?

A: Santa Pause



Q: What does an elf study in school?

A: The elfabet



Q: What should you give your parents at Christmas?

A: A list of what you want.



Q: What goes oh, oh, oh?

A: Santa Claus walking backward!



Q: What kind of bug hates Christmas?

A: A humbug!

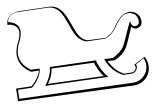
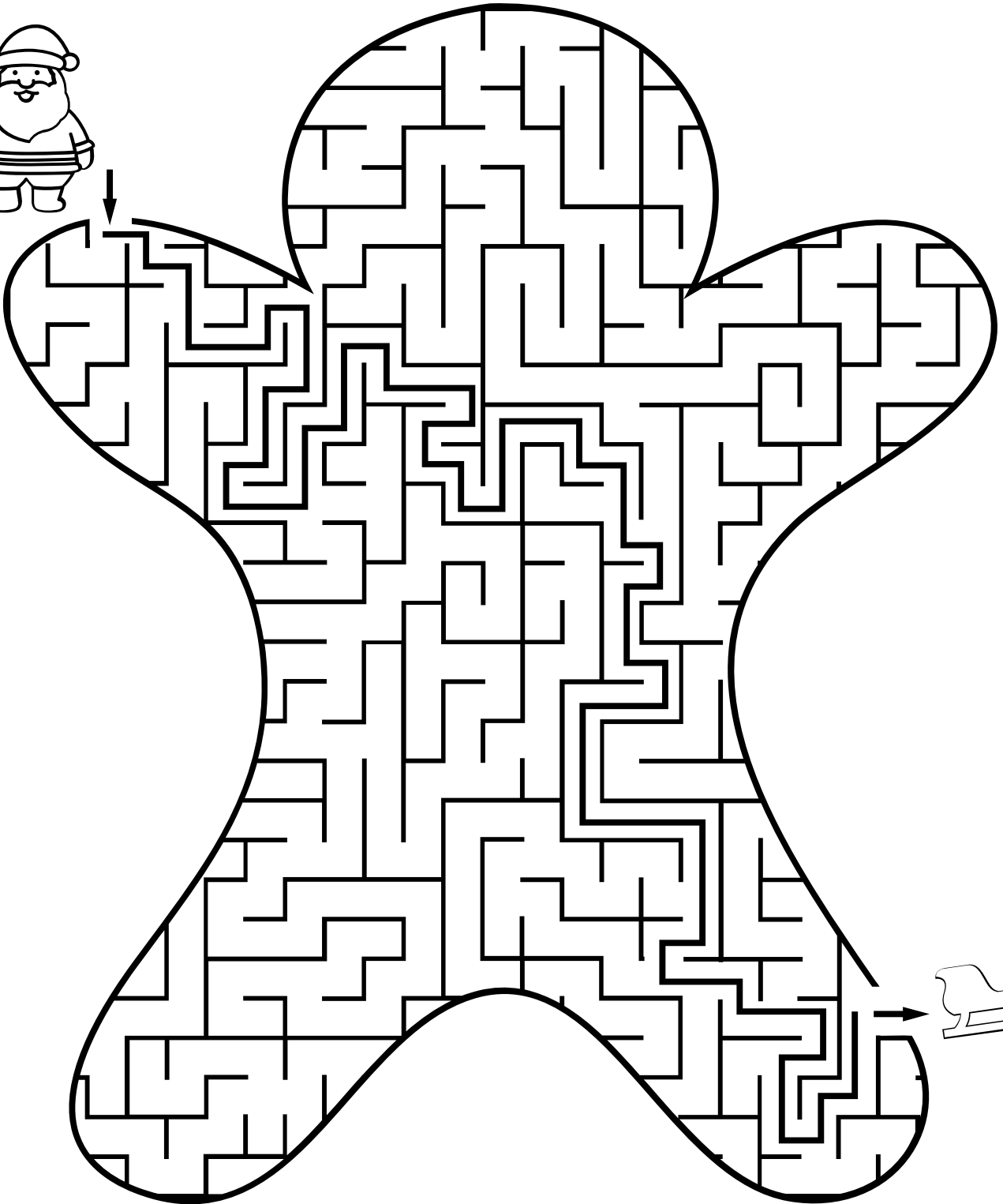


## Let there be kindness at Christmas

Let there be kindness at Christmas, for one and all,  
Let others know the dove of peace has come to call.  
Let others see that with you, Christmas can be kind,  
Leave spoonful of joyfulness for others to find.  
Distribute your smiles, let them float to those around,  
So when the smiles reaches them, happiness is found.

Let there be understanding at Christmas this year,  
Let others know that your forgiveness is now here.  
Let others see that with you, hate does not belong,  
That with you, they will once more find hope and feel strong.  
Open up your heart, and let them know that you care,  
And that when tomorrow comes, you will still be there.

© Jenny Maryl



# AN EASY AND CLASSIC VEGAN CHRISTMAS TRIFLE

## Ingredients

1 ready-made vegan sponge cake (approx. 180g) or homemade.

2 pots vegan raspberry or strawberry jelly (approx. 175g each) or homemade with agar-agar.

500g frozen or fresh berries, such as raspberries or a summer fruit mix.

500ml ready-made plant-based custard (oat or soya works well), or homemade.

250ml vegan whippable cream (e.g., Elmlea Plant Double or a chilled can of full-fat coconut cream).

Optional: 2-3 tbsp sherry or fruit juice to soak the sponge, caster sugar, vanilla extract, and decorations like flaked almonds or glacé cherries.

## Method

**Prepare the Jelly and Sponge** If making jelly from scratch, prepare it first and pour into your trifle dish to set in the fridge (around 2 hours). If using ready-made, cut the sponge cake into cubes or slices and use them to line the base of a large glass trifle bowl. Dot half of the berries over the sponge and spoon over half the ready-made jelly (or place the set jelly layer on top if homemade).

**Add Fruit and Custard** Repeat the layers with the remaining berries and jelly, allowing the jelly to seep into the gaps in the sponge. Pour the cooled or ready-made custard over the fruit and jelly layer, gently smoothing the surface.

**Whip the Cream** Pour the vegan cream into a bowl with a little sugar and vanilla extract if desired. Whisk until it holds soft peaks.

**Assemble, chill and pile the whipped cream** on top of the custard layer. Transfer the trifle to the fridge for at least 1-2 hours (preferably overnight) to set and allow the flavors to blend.

**Decorate and Serve.** Before serving, decorate the top with flaked almonds, fresh berries, or vegan sprinkles.

This festive dessert is best served cold, ensuring each serving includes a bit of every delicious layer.

from BBC good food website.

God is with us  
(based on the tune "Dix" - As with gladness)

God is here with us - humbly so  
In a stable long ago  
Love so divine in human form  
Comes to us, so simply born  
God is with us all life through  
Christmas proves it to be true

Love is here with us - in our hearts  
Let the hope of Christmas start  
Love is the gift God longs to give  
To inspire the way we live  
God is with us where we are  
Stood beneath a Christmas star

Peace is here with us - softly so  
We can help God's peace to grow  
We can unwrap what Christmas means  
All our prayers and all our dreams  
Meet this child in swaddling bands  
As at last we understand

God's love is with us - hope has come  
In the gift of God's own Son  
Love breaks into a world forlorn  
Full of hope this Christmas morn  
Once for all God's love declared  
To God's children everywhere  
SamG 17th December 2023

# Diary

## SUNDAY WORSHIP

### DECEMBER

7TH REV PETER LITTLE  
(COMMUNION)  
14TH FESTIVAL SERVICE  
21ST CAROL SERVICE  
25TH CHRISTMAS DAY FAMILY  
SERVICE  
28TH CAROL PRAISE

### JANUARY

4TH MR SAM GOODMAN  
(COMMUNION)  
11TH MR TERRY NASH  
18TH REV KEVIN JONES  
25TH TBC

### CHURCH MEETING

18th January 2026

### ELDERS' MEETINGS

11th December  
15th January  
@3.30pm

### EVENTS

7th December: Church Lunch  
12th December : Carols Round the  
Tree with Friday Coffee and Mince  
Pies.

### OTHER DATES

#### Monday Fellowship:

8th December 2pm  
12th January 2pm  
26th January 2pm

#### Derby Inclusive Fellowship

6th December: When Does Christmas  
Start? @4pm  
21st December Inclusive Carols and 9  
readings @2.30pm  
3rd January: Film: 1946, The  
Mistranslation that Shifted a Culture  
@4pm  
18th January: Baptism @2.30

# CENTRAL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

STUART HOUSE, GREEN LANE,

DERBY DE1 1RS

TELEPHONE: 01332 346627

**website:** [www.derbycentralurc.net](http://www.derbycentralurc.net)

**Facebook:** @derbycentralurc

**Instagram:** @derbycentralurc

**Rev Kevin Jones 07547 216080**

**Secretary: Mrs Christine Fielding 01332 514631**

**Treasurer: Mr Sam Goodman 07779 032979**

**Safeguarding Officers:**

**Mrs Maureen Hinchliffe 07582 294 464**

**Mr Terry Nash 07834997825**

**Room bookings: Duty Managers 01332 346627 or via the website**

**A large print magazine is available on request.**

**Back Copies of our Magazine can be found on the website!**

**The February/March Magazine will be available in late January. Please send contributions (be creative) to arrive no later than Sunday, January 11th. to Christine Fielding, care of the church, or by email to**

**[christinefielding706@gmail.com](mailto:christinefielding706@gmail.com)**

**Contributions to the weekly sheet should be sent to Cathy by email at [cathy@cathyjim.co.uk](mailto:cathy@cathyjim.co.uk) or by phone at 07986450580**

**Deadline Friday noon, Please!**

Central United Reformed Church is the working name for Central, Derby,

United Reformed Church Charity- Registration Number 1130551