

# INSIGHT



This is the message that we hope to communicate through all of our Christmas services and activities in 2024. If you are reading this and are hearing this news of hope for the first time, then do join us. The services are listed on the back page. And of course, can I encourage regulars to be thinking about who you know locally who you could invite to hear this message over the next few weeks. The Open Air Carol Service is a particularly good opportunity to invite a friend who is enquiring about the Christian faith. Please do also pray for God to use these upcoming events for his glory.

## ► THIS CHRISTMAS AT MPC

It has been said that 'hope is to the soul what air is to the lungs'. And in a world troubled by war, the effects of climate change and cost of living crises to mention just a few, for some, it can seem that there is little hope around. However, the message of Christmas is that there is a hope that transcends all human misery and can bring light and joy into the darkest of life experiences.



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Yes, my soul, find rest in God;  
my hope comes from him.

Psalm 62:5



***Sunday 1st December***

10.30am  
All Age Christingle Service

***Sunday 8th December***

6.00pm  
Contemporary Carols

***Sunday 15th December***

4.30pm  
Open Air Carol Service

***Sunday 22nd December***

6.00pm  
Traditional Carols By Candlelight



**MP**  
**C♥**

Encountering God's Love

***Christmas Eve***

3.00pm  
All Age Nativity & Carols

***Christmas Eve***

11.15pm  
Midnight Communion

***Christmas Day***

9.00am  
Communion Service

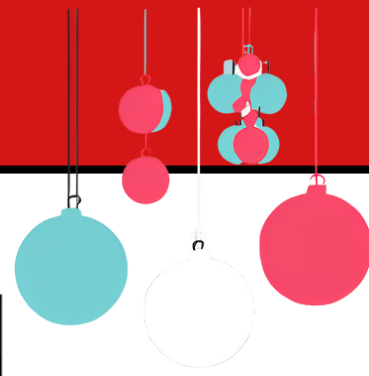
***Christmas Day***

10.30am  
All Age Celebration Service

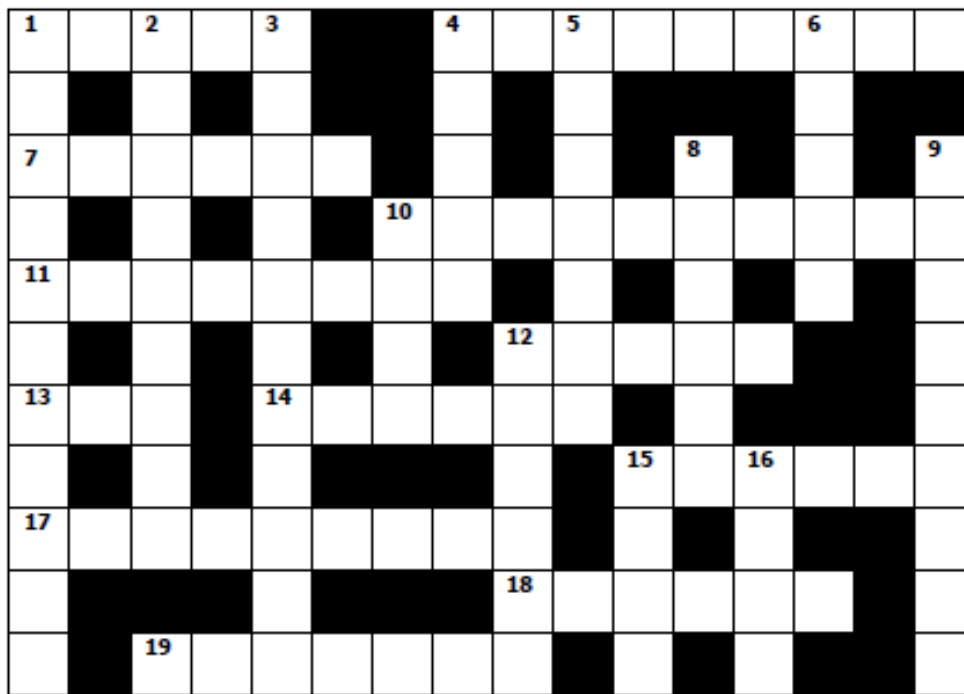
*Yes, my soul, find rest in God; my hope comes from him.  
Psalm 62:5 – The Bible*



# WINTER CROSSWORD



Winter Crossword



## ACROSS

1. You are commanded not to do this to your neighbour's wife, ox, or ass! (5)
4. Maria and Stan upset the good guy in the parable (9)
7. Was one of Jacob's wives mistaken for a Chelsea girl – to some extent, Yes! (6)
10. Chap Boris H upset turns out to be a leading churchman (10)
11. With cathedral empty, rise up somehow and create a clerical vestment (8)
12. Holy object laid oddly in playing field (5)
13. Woman of the Bible who fell – among thieves! (3)
14. Starts to give out some printed evangelical leaflets – and that's the absolute truth (6)
15. Player upset the traditional look of the Gates to Heaven! (6)
17. See red cat move to do damage to that which is sacred (9)
18. Apparently UN beer caused this son of Jacob and Leah to take a tumble (6)
19. I allege this could be the area in which Jesus performed much of his ministry (7)

## DOWN

1. Ditch sermon about body of believers (11)
2. The state we'd be in without an Incumbent! (9)
3. Cleo and Goliath are confused about the study of God and religion (11)
4. The whole point of a church! (5)
5. Following chemical spillage and the loss of some carbon, this archangel miraculously appears! (7)
6. The old church tax. No doubt it helped – to some extent (5)
8. Dowse for water ... and become godlike in the process?! (6)
9. A set of books with which to make Cora happy, perhaps? (9)
10. Cast about for this book recounting the deeds and doings of the Apostles (4)
12. Respect vicar who lost North Dakota! (6)
15. The Bible's chief epistle-writer making a return in Zulu apparel! (4)
16. The last word in Testaments, Old and New ... and elsewhere! (4)



# OUR YOUTH MINISTRY



Most of you will be familiar with our main Sunday youth groups, T3 and MYF. Whilst we do offer other groups and socials midweek for our young people, our primary focus in the Youth Ministry at MPC is on these two weekly groups – and I wanted to just update you on what we've been up to through this last term! T3 is for 11-14s on Sunday mornings, MYF is for 14-18s on Sunday evenings. Most of the time T3 and MYF don't follow the same session plans, however this last term, we felt that both of our groups would benefit greatly from an overview of the Bible. So often when we read the Word, we fail to understand how it fits into the bigger picture of God's plans; an overview of the whole of scripture helps us with this problem.

To help us visualise as we go along, we drew a big map of the ancient near east (where the Bible takes place) on the youth room blackboard and we plot the Bible story on the map as we go through. We also gave the young people Bible timelines to help them see how it fits together chronologically. Here's roughly what we've covered in our sessions:

We began our journey, as one does, in Genesis 1 with the creation of everything. The universe is incredible, and the young people made their favourite things in creation out of modelling clay. And we, amongst all the other incredible things and creatures, are the ones made in God's image. However – we all know how the story continues – the fall of humanity in Adam and Eve happens and the state of humans just gets worse and worse. It gets so bad that God has to send a big flood to wipe people out!

Then a guy called Abraham comes onto the scene, and despite him and his wife Sarah's old age, God promises that his descendants would be as many as the stars in the sky – so we made a massive painting with the relevant verse 'Genesis 15:5' and a starry scene in the background, with mini canvases spelling 'promise.' Abraham does get a son in the end, Isaac, who has Jacob, who has Joseph, and Joseph is sold into slavery in Egypt. But God uses him in a mighty way, and he rises to power and saves Egypt and surrounding nations from famine. But the Israelites end up enslaved by Egypt for 400 years... Fortunately, 1 Moses and 10 plagues later, they're free!

Then they wander in the desert, complaining the entire time, God gives them the 10 commandments, the sacrificial law and the other laws before Joshua conquers the promised land. Last week (at the time I'm writing this article) we looked at the Judges and Kings, and the cycles of sin the Israelites found themselves in – with God's love and broken heart for them expressed in Hosea 11.

We're looking forward to covering the exile, prophets, psalms and then getting into the New Testament in the new year! What we have found is that the entire Bible points toward Jesus; right from the beginning in Genesis 3:15, through Abraham's near sacrifice of Isaac, the Passover, the sacrificial law, and much more. And, like the Israelites, trapped in cycles of sin and rebellion needed a Saviour, so do we need Him.

Peter Brown  
Youth Minister, Moulton Parish Church







# OUR YOUTH MINISTRY





Sunday 24 th November saw Moulton Community Centre buzzing with activity as the village got itself into the Christmas spirit with the Christmas Cracker. It was wonderful to see the community coming together to support local businesses and groups, despite Storm Bert's best efforts to keep people at home.

We were given two opportunities throughout the day to sing carols to the passing visitors and had two separate groups come together to do this. Huge thanks to Neal Kennedy for accompanying both groups very ably with his accordion and to Pete Brown for bringing his guitar along to add some more modern carols into the mix. There were very few people who just walked by without stopping to watch for a few minutes and many joined in with singing the familiar songs. It was a joy to see the smiles on people's faces as they sang of the birth of Jesus.

We also had a wonderful time making Christingles with many children and some adults too. Throughout the day we made over 100 Christingles and had the opportunity to talk about the meaning behind each element of them. We were blown away by how many of the children were able to tell us all about them from either previous years' experience or from what they had recently learnt at school. Nobody could blame the little lad who suggested that he needed to 'check' the sweets before putting one on his cocktail sticks either. You can never be too safe! Of course none of this could happen without the dedicated volunteers who came along to help throughout the day- huge thanks go out to everyone who gave up their time.

It was a privilege to be able to talk to so many different people and invite them along to one or more of the many services we've got happening over the Christmas period. As a newcomer, it was so lovely to hear how enthusiastically people were talking about the events in years gone by and how keen they were to attend again this year. What a fantastic opportunity we have to share the love of Jesus with those around us at this Christmas period.

CLAIRE SMITH





# MINUTES OF THE PCC MEETING



## **Summary of Minutes of the PCC Meeting held on Monday 17 June 2024**

**The minutes of the PCC meeting held on 29 April 2024 (with an amendment) were approved.**

### **Vicar's Business:**

**Bishop Debbie and Jonnie Deja have met with regard to the Church Plant's status. MPC has a financial commitment to the middle of 2026**

### **Building Matters:**

**Horsewell Court house: redecorating planned for 6/7 July and recarpeting w/c 22 July**

### **Safeguarding, Risk and Health & Safety:**

**The PCC are doing very well with regard to DBS checks and training.**

**There is a new Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, Victoria Kellett.**

### **AOB:**

**Approval for insurance purposes was granted for the MyF visit to the Big Church Festival.**

**Quotes for new sound equipment were approved.**

Lynda Featley  
PCC Secretary.



# BRIGHT LIGHTS



Just before the clocks changed on 26th October we had the chance to share the light of Jesus with over 30 children and their families at the Bright Lights Party. It was wonderful to see lots of familiar faces coming back to church who we've seen before at Heroes Academy or Tots as well as many of our church families. The evening started with some high energy songs and plenty of actions before Mike the Light, Bill and Tess set the scene for the evening. We did, of course, need a silly game while we were all together, so some of our

youth volunteered (or were they just volunteered by Pete?) to be dressed as pumpkins! The children had a great time stuffing as much newspaper as possible up the orange t-shirts to create the pumpkins with the biggest circumference. It was a close call and all of the pumpkins ended up much bigger than we expected.

It was then time to learn how we were like pumpkins. The children thought I was a bit crazy when I first suggested this but as we went through together they started to understand what was meant. We all have yucky stuff inside- our horrible thoughts and actions- but we are able to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit to help us show Jesus' light to those around us. Being able to see the difference between the uncarved pumpkin still containing all of its yucky insides, and the carved one shining out the light really helped us to understand what Jesus can do for our lives. We went away remembering that whenever we saw carved pumpkins shining out the light over the Halloween period, we could remember what Jesus said in John 8:12- "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

No party would be complete without some fun games. The children had a go at the Bright Lights fair on the glow-stick hoopla, pumpkin shy and light up ball toss. Our youth helpers did a wonderful job making sure all of these games ran smoothly. We also had some lovely crafts to take home, including tealight holders, Autumnal wreaths and firework sweetie kebabs. Before we knew it, it was time for our Goodbye Song. We had a brilliant evening and can't wait to do it all again next year!

CLAIRE SMITH





# MY TESTIMONY by PAT GRIFFITHS



Growing up, I considered myself a Christian, living in a bush town in South Australia. The churches were the centre of social life in the town. Life was very relaxed and happy. I attended Sunday School, Church and choir and young people's youth activities. All separate from my family, just something I wanted to do. I started Nursing.

I moved to England with my family in the late 1960's. Life then changed completely as, instead of returning to Australia as I had planned, I met my husband and happily started a family and career here. Religion continued to play more of a background part of life then.

I have had an eventful and wonderful life with fabulous family and friends. I thought life couldn't be better.....

In early 2022 my world imploded through the unexpected passing of my husband. I kept busy sorting out as much as I could with lots of support from my family and friends. I was managing to exist by moving from task to task but inside I felt completely empty. One night I found myself absolutely bereft and couldn't find the means to comfort myself. I asked that question - "Why?" I became aware of a warming calmness that I could feel moving down on me and I heard the words, "I am here".... and after a pause, "Find me." I didn't question it until the next day as I had fallen asleep and did feel better. I didn't really understand what had happened but within a couple of days a nephew, who is a committed Christian somehow knew I was struggling and came and gave me a small book of the Gospel of John and two small crosses. He said to read the Gospel and that I would find great comfort. I did this and it switched on a little light in me. I began to feel much better emotionally and spiritually, but what next?

My husband and I had been about to start a Bible Study class before he became ill. I contacted Moulton church and asked about the Ladies Bible Study group. It was a group that I was warmly welcomed into and it fired an interest in the Bible that I had not had the chance to explore in detail earlier in my life. The knowledge and companionship has proven to be a great joy. I was also offered the chance to attend the latest Alpha Group, which is an exploratory weekly study group looking at an introduction to Christianity.





This added to my direction with easy and clear explanation of basic Christian beliefs .... and true faith. This also led on to the 321 sessions which were also very interesting.

I felt more confident about my future and have felt that God has followed my progress. It has also allowed me to research into the truth of the Bible which has been a great comfort for me.

I wanted to cement my faith and membership into the Christian and Church family, so asked if it would be possible to be confirmed. I attended confirmation classes followed by my recent confirmation. It was a wonderful ceremony with adult baptisms as well.

My self confidence has improved greatly since the early days of the Ladies Bible Study group and also in life. I have accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour and couldn't be happier. I feel I have been guided here

Thank you to all who have been a part of my journey, which has not yet ended.





# SUMMARY OF MINUTES FROM THE PCC HALF DAY HELD ON SATURDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2024

## **Part 1- Be Faithful**

Our challenges/risks are not just ones of physical health and safety, there are spiritual risks we face as well.

Risks from within and without:

- pressure to dilute the message of the gospel, pressure from worldly distractions, obstacles deliberately put in front of us.
- the risk of false teachers from within causing the sheep of the flock to be troubled and division.
- pressures from the institutional church.

Risk and Opportunity analysis: the initial work on spiritual and physical risks was carried out by the MMVG. The Risk Register was discussed, the risks will be arranged by risk category and priority.

## **Part 2- Routine Business**

The minutes of the PCC meeting held on 17 June 2024 were approved.

### **Vicar's business:**

Lunch Club has been reviewed.

A new 20-30s homegroup has started.

### **Matters Arising:**

Grace Church Upton is now a separate charity but still has no BMO. Jonnie Deja is still an Associate Vicar of Moulton.

The Emergency Fund will in future be reported in the overall church accounts.

### **Policies Review:**

The following policies were approved:

- Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders.
- Performance Review Policy and Procedure.
- Salary Review Policy and Procedure.

### **Finance Update:**

Our biggest issue is the decrease in giving.

A Gift Day will be held on 17 November.

Wednesday Tots has relocated to the church centre, this removes the cost of hiring the community centre.

### **Appointment of the Pastoral Team**

The Pastoral Team was appointed.

# HOPE



**Would you like to find out more about Christian hope?  
If so, you're warmly invited to...**



**Wednesday 15th January 2025 | 7.30pm | Moulton Church  
Centre**

**For more info contact Nick Alexander  
([n.alexander@moultonchurch.co.uk](mailto:n.alexander@moultonchurch.co.uk))**

**Do let us know if you'd like to come.**

**Or, don't have time to attend a course, why not visit**

**<https://321.speaklife.org.uk/course/321>**

**...a brief introduction to life and faith.**



# FAVOURITE CAROLS - O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL



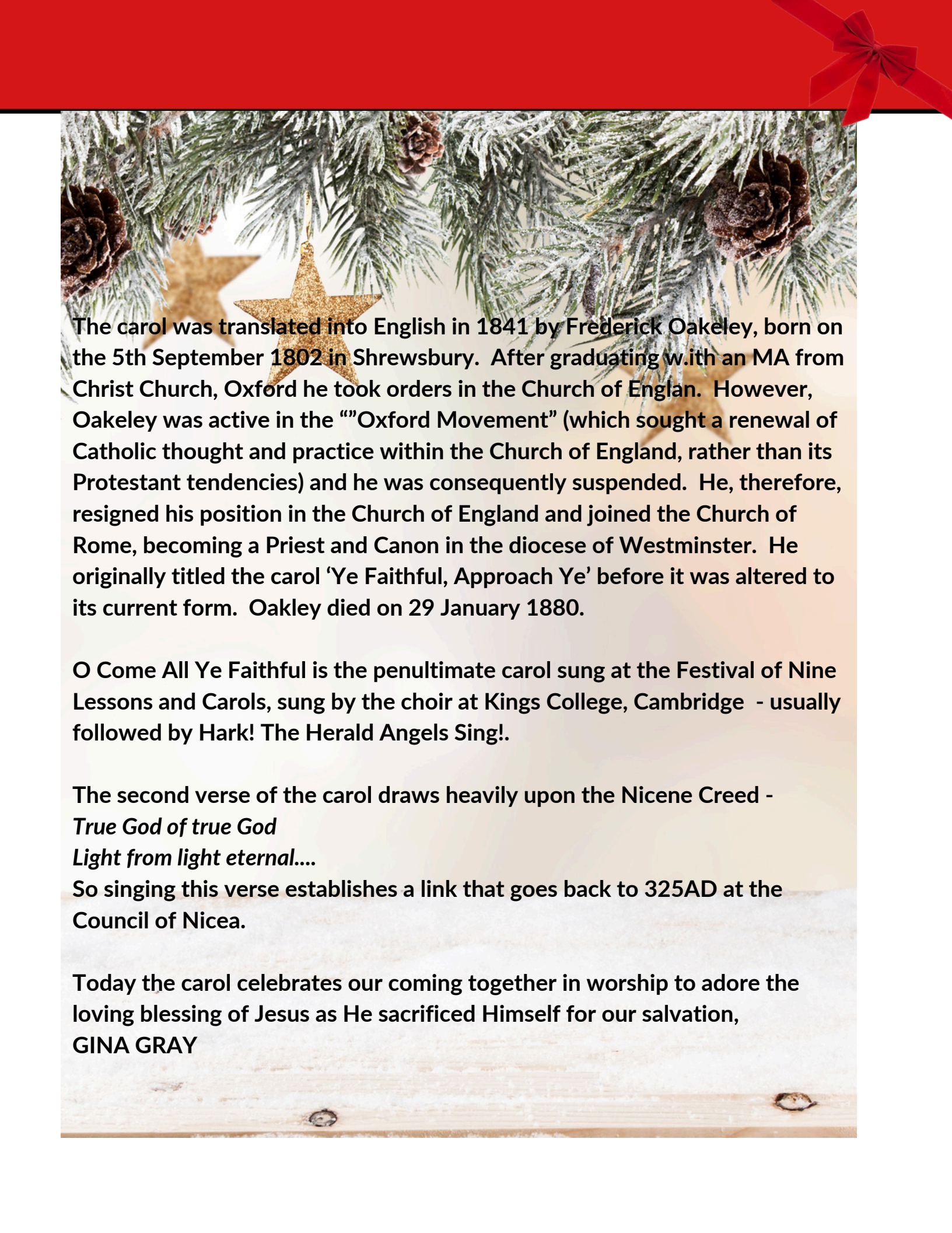
This rousing carol often ends Christmas carol services. The title draws us into the Christmas story in Luke 2:8-16 where angels appear to shepherds glorifying God because of the birth of the baby Jesus, our Saviour, who lies in a manger in Bethlehem.

This hymn is also known as “Adeste Fidelis” and is sung in Latin at the Vatican each Christmas.

John Francis Wade is now widely recognised as the author and composer of this hymn, although at one time it was believed the text was written by Cistercian monks. Wade was born in 1711 in England. However, he was a Roman Catholic who had to flee to France in 1745 after the failed Jacobite Rebellion, leading to discrimination against Catholics. He lived in exile in Douai in northern France teaching music at an English college. He also supplemented his income by hand copying chant music which he then sold to wealthy families for use in their chapels. His calligraphy was so beautiful that the copies were in great demand and he would sign each one. Wade died in Douai in 1786.

The earliest manuscript of Adeste Fidelis which was written in Latin in 4 stanzas or verses and signed by Wade is dated around 1743. There is a printed version in a book published by Wade dating to 1751 and held by Stonyhurst College in Lancashire. Within 50 years four additional stanzas also in Latin had been added - three by the French Catholic priest Jean-Francois-Etienne Borderies and a fourth anonymous verse which is rarely printed.





The carol was translated into English in 1841 by Frederick Oakeley, born on the 5th September 1802 in Shrewsbury. After graduating with an MA from Christ Church, Oxford he took orders in the Church of England. However, Oakeley was active in the "Oxford Movement" (which sought a renewal of Catholic thought and practice within the Church of England, rather than its Protestant tendencies) and he was consequently suspended. He, therefore, resigned his position in the Church of England and joined the Church of Rome, becoming a Priest and Canon in the diocese of Westminster. He originally titled the carol 'Ye Faithful, Approach Ye' before it was altered to its current form. Oakeley died on 29 January 1880.

O Come All Ye Faithful is the penultimate carol sung at the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, sung by the choir at Kings College, Cambridge - usually followed by Hark! The Herald Angels Sing!.

The second verse of the carol draws heavily upon the Nicene Creed -  
*True God of true God*

*Light from light eternal....*

So singing this verse establishes a link that goes back to 325AD at the Council of Nicea.

Today the carol celebrates our coming together in worship to adore the loving blessing of Jesus as He sacrificed Himself for our salvation,

GINA GRAY



# THE FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS & CAROLS



We all like Christmas carols, don't we? - however often we have heard them I certainly do. The pinnacle of carol-singing to my mind is that of King's College Chapel, Cambridge in the annual Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. I once went to an Advent Carol Service there whilst I was up at Cambridge, but I have never been to the Festival, which takes place during the University's Christmas vacation. However, it is broadcast by the BBC, on radio since 1928 and on television since 1954. I try to watch it if I can.


King's College was founded by King Henry VI in 1441, but the Chapel's construction was not finished until about seventy years later. The building, both the exterior and the interior, is as glorious as the singing within. The view of the Chapel and the Gibb's Building alongside it, when seen from across the River Cam, is the most picturesque and, I guess, the most often photographed in England.

The Festival was the idea of Eric Milner-White. He had been an undergraduate of the College before the First World War and, after a distinguished career during the War, returned as Dean in 1918, the year the Festival was first held. It was not an entirely original concept, something similar had been tried in the new Diocese of Truro in 1880.

The music for the Festival includes all the traditional carols, plus some resurrected for the occasion from Mediaeval sources and others written or arranged by composers of the present day, such as John Rutter. The Service intersperses these carols with nine readings from the Bible (the Lessons). The readers range from a choir-boy to the Provost (Head) of King's College. The adult members of the Choir are all Choral Scholars of the College, the boys, when they are not involved in Chapel Services, live and work at the Choir School, studying the usual school subjects as well as music.

Since the inception of the Festival there have been six Directors of Music at King's - A H Mann, Boris Ord, David Willcocks, Philip Ledger and till his death in 2019 Stephen Cleobury. Today the Choir is directed by Daniel Hyde.





They train the boys as well as attending rehearsals and directing the singing in each Service. The College appoints a separate, usually undergraduate, Organ Scholar to accompany the singing and to play the organ voluntaries and other solos at the beginning and end of the Festival and each other Service.

Many cathedrals and parish churches have copied King's College in putting on similar Christmas Carol Services. Moulton Parish Church has (or used to have) its "Carols by Candlelight" though there are usually only six or seven readings instead of the traditional nine. The last reading is always from the first chapter of John's Gospel, "In the beginning was the Word...." (John 1:1-14). Years ago, when I was a Churchwarden, it used to be my privilege to read this passage.

JOHN CUTLER



# WINTER CROSSWORD SOLUTION



Winter Crossword Solution

1 C	O	2 V	E	3 T				4 S	A	5 M	A	R	I	6 T	A	N
H		I		H				P		I				I		
7 R	A	C	H	E	L			I		C		8 D		T		9 A
I		A		O		10 A	R	C	H	B	I	S	H	O	P	
11 S	U	R	P	L	I	C	E		A		V		E			O
T		L		O		T		12 R	E	L	I	C				C
13 E	V	E		14 G	O	S	P	E	L		N					R
N		S		I				V		15 P	E	16 A	R	L	Y	
17 D	E	S	E	C	R	A	T	E		A		M				P
O				A				18 R	E	U	B	E	N			H
M		19 G	A	L	I	L	E	E		L		N				A

# REFRESH

## SAVE THE DATE



## Church Weekend 2025

Refresh is our new style of church weekend, in the church and church centre, which is accessible and affordable to all. There will be space for all ages to focus on God and what he is saying to us, as a church, and how best to be a church.

The children will have a full programme of age appropriate teaching.

The adults will have talks from the renowned author and speaker Christopher Ash  
There will also be a variety of social events for all ages

## What Not To Miss 2025

- 12th January - Mission Focus Sunday - including lunch
- 2nd February - Quiz Night
- 1st March - Women's Conference
- 15th May - Northampton Male Voice Choir Concert
- 17th May - Festival Saturday
- 6th July - One Church Sunday
- 28th September - Harvest Bring and Share Lunch and games
- 15th November - Men's Conference
- 14th December - Open Air Carol Service

Full Calendar will be out in early new year



# KNOWING YOU....

## Gary Crane



**My family:** I am in a wheelchair because I had a massive head injury caused by a cyst in the brain which grew from birth. I had the cyst removed in Oxford and I suffer from Cerebral Ataxia which is why I'm in a wheelchair. My lovely Mum and Dad sadly passed away a few years ago. I have an older brother Steve, who has now moved to Lincoln, his partner's name is Ann-Marie. I married Jan in 1992 in a little chapel in the High Street, Irchester. Great day!

**My job:** I was a printer for 3 years and then I was a musician. We won a Battle of the Bands Competition in Leicester and from there we won a 3 month contract in the Canary Islands. I loved those years in the band but we split up just before I had my brain injury.

**How did you come to be at Moulton?** My parents were staying at Ashurst Mews in Moulton and when visiting one Sunday Jan and I went in whilst passing. Jonny was speaking and we were blown away by what he was teaching. It felt like we were both being washed with water. This was just before Covid and lockdown, but we're still here, made of hard stuff!

**Favourite Bible verse:** When the paralysed man is lowered through the roof by his friends to get him to Jesus -

**How do I spend my free time?** Watching TV, coffee at Workbridge and garden centres, cinema and Nandos.

**Currently reading:** Due to my constant double vision, I don't read

**Last film:** Bob Marley

**Music I enjoy:** UB40 with Ali Campbell are my favourite band. My favourite Christian band is Unspoken

**If I could time travel....** I'd go back to when I was in the band in the Canary Islands.

