



## Bunyan Meeting

# News Letter/34

SUNDAY 6 DECEMBER 2020

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Dear friends

Many years ago, R. J. Campbell of the City Temple recounted an encounter with a member of his congregation to whom he had taken “an instant liking”. This man was full of enthusiasm for a new project that the church was undertaking to better the lot of others. Campbell noted that this individual was “both earnest and unselfish in his purpose”. Some years later this person received a very long prison sentence and



Campbell commented that: “It is impossible to forecast what any of us might do when in a tight place and unable to get out by fair means”.

When we find ourselves in a position of difficulty we would hope not to fall into bad ways, but the story of this once upright and honest fellow gives us cause for sober reflection.

We can all behave in a manner which is out of character. Some particular action which lets us down, those hard or angry words we used and now regret, that poor and careless way in which we treated another. And we sometimes struggle to understand those deepest motives which cause us to behave in such ways.

To look within ourselves and discover what motivates us is usually a hugely difficult exercise. We are all very complex individuals!

Jeremiah speaks of the human hearts and asks “who can understand it?” (Jeremiah 17 v 9) whilst the Psalmist reminds us that we “are fearfully and wonderfully made.” (Psalm 139 v 14)

When we find ourselves in a fix, when we are driven into a corner, when we respond to difficulties, stress and challenges, we can sometimes discover that we are only too willing to conceal our true motives to ourselves as well as to the world.

We can struggle to call some poor behaviour by its true name before we undertake it, even if later we are able to recognise and name our fault.

We all need to look within and endeavour to be more honest and straight forward with ourselves about our motives and actions. If we are able to do this, we will not go far wrong.

Please keep sending your articles for our News Letter direct to me at [chrisdamp@mac.com](mailto:chrisdamp@mac.com) or by post to the church office for my attention.

Your friend and Minister

**Chris**

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*“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. Psalm 19 v 14*

**CHRISTMAS SERVICES**

SUNDAY 20TH DECEMBER  
 11.00AM **ALL AGE SERVICE & NATIVITY**  
 6.30PM **CAROL SERVICE**

THURSDAY 24TH DECEMBER  
 4.00PM **ALL AGE CRIB SERVICE**

FRIDAY 25TH DECEMBER  
 10.00AM **MORNING WORSHIP FOR CHRISTMAS**

All Services in Church ...  
 It is essential to book your seat in advance - contact the Church Office:  
 01234 213722; email: [bunyanmeeting@gmail.com](mailto:bunyanmeeting@gmail.com)  
 Remember to bring a face mask, and it is important that you keep a distance of six feet or two metres from others in the church building.  
 ... and Live-Streamed via our website:  
[www.bunyanmeeting.co.uk](http://www.bunyanmeeting.co.uk)

## Sunday Worship at Mill Street and on the Church Website

Bunyan Meeting will be open once again for worship from this Sunday, 6th December.

Arrangements for worship will be just as they were prior to the recent lockdown.

This Sunday we have a Communion Service at 11.00am and we will also be holding an evening service at 6.30pm to mark the season of Advent. We hope that both of these services will also be live streamed.

We were sorry not to have been able to live stream our service last Sunday morning but we hope to be able to live stream the service this week. Details of how to connect to this broadcast service will be distributed by an email from the church office if and when they are available and will also be posted on the church web site.

## This Week at Bunyan Meeting

Sunday 6th December	11.00am	<b>Morning Worship and Communion</b>
	6.30pm	<b>Evening Worship for Advent</b>
Tuesday 8th December	5.30pm	<b>Museum Committee</b> (via zoom)
Wednesday 9th December	2.00pm	<b>Deacons' Meeting</b> (via zoom)
Sunday 13th December	11.00am	<b>Morning Worship</b>

## Thank You From Tear Fund

Thank you to all who took part in the Quiz and to those who donated to Tear Fund.

It was an amazing night, made all the more brilliant by how everyone pulled together after what's been a pretty tough year.

Together we have raised £230,350.00 and money is still coming in.

Thank you.

**Jocelyn**



Richard Shuttleworth  
 in 1935.  
 Shuttleworth Trust

## Early Airfields in Bedfordshire

Two of the early airfields in Bedfordshire were at Barton Le Clay and Old Warden.

The Barton airfield was used in 1937 to re-fuel the aircraft that was taking part in the King's Cup Air Race from London to Birmingham.

The Old Warden airfield was established by Richard Shuttleworth. The Shuttleworth family came from Lincoln where Mr Shuttleworth made his money in building the Clayton and Shuttleworth Steam Tractor Engines.

Richard Shuttleworth went to Bedford School and on to university where he studied Mechanics. Soon after leaving university, he purchased a racing car and competed in the British Grand Prix at the Brooklands Racing Track. He then purchased an aircraft and learned to fly from the Old Warden Estate.

He took part in the Viceroy of India's Cup Race by flying from England to India and came fourth.

During one of his mother's Garden Parties Richard became so bored he decided to go for a flight in his aircraft and carried out a bombing raid by bombing the Garden Party with toilet rolls.

Sadly Richard was killed in a flying accident in 1940.

## Ken Wells

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### Mission Aviation Fellowship's South Sudan Team is Growing!



“In order to respond to the incredible opportunities to bring Christian help and hope, we have expanded our fleet to eight aircraft. Obviously, we also have to recruit additional pilots, engineers and other operational missionaries.

It's vital that we provide a family-friendly environment for our staff who serve under challenging, stressful conditions in South Sudan. Safe homes also enable them to remain in post for longer periods of time.

You can help us provide our staff with safe, new homes at MAF's Korok housing compound.”

As we at Bunyan Meeting support MAF in South Sudan I felt this should be shared amongst the Church Family.

Your gift this Giving Tuesday will be automatically DOUBLED — up to a maximum of £100,000 — and go directly towards building additional homes at Korok!

Whilst Tuesday will have gone by the time this is read by those receiving the information, there is still an opportunity to give if people wish to do so via this link:

[Giving Tuesday - God is the builder](#)

## Warwick Browning

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### What is a Christingle?

What is a Christingle? When I put this question into Google the reply was:-

“Christingles are oranges wrapped in red tape, decorated with sweets, with a candle on top”

Whilst this description may fit the appearance of some modern Christingles, from my perspective this answer is unsatisfactory.

For me, having been nurtured within the Moravian Church traditions, a Christingle is a candle made special and used as a powerful visual symbol of the coming of Christ, the Light of the World.

What has come to be regarded as the first 'Christingle' Service is recorded in the diary of the Moravian congregation in Marienborn, Germany, many years before the invention of gas lamps or electric lights when candles were commonplace items in everyday use. According to the diary entry for 20th December 1747, the minister, Johannes (John) de Watteville, began the children's service with the singing of hymns. He then read verses which some of the children had written “in honour of the Saviour's birth” and went on to explain what happiness had come to people from the birth of Jesus, “who has kindled in each little heart a flame which keeps ever burning to their joy and our happiness.” To impress this upon the memory, each child was given a

lighted wax candle tied with a red ribbon, “which occasioned in great and small a happy children’s joy.” The service ended with the prayer, “Lord Jesus, kindle a flame in these dear children’s hearts that theirs become like thine”. The Marienborn diary concludes, “hereupon the children went full of joy with their lighted candles to their rooms and we went glad and happy to bed”.

Subsequently, Moravian ministers, missionaries and church members took the concept of the Christingle (or, more generally, the special Christ candle), to many parts of the world, so the tradition is valued in such diverse places as Labrador and the West Indies, in South Asia, Africa and the Americas as well as in Europe. In various places, the candles have been made special in very different ways. In Britain, that which has become widely known as the “Christingle” has evolved, with some variations arising between individual congregations. There are gaps in the record concerning the spread and evolution of the Christingle based on the orange, but I understand there are indications of its use in the family homes of Moravians in Yorkshire early in the nineteenth century.



The elements of the traditional Christingle as transmitted to me within the Bedford St. Peter’s Moravian Congregation (founded 1745) are as follows:-

- The **Orange** representing *The World*
- The **White ruff** made from tissue paper *Purity*
- The **Goose Quill** - forming the candle holder and split into several spikes *Birds of the Air & Beasts of the Field*
- Blanched **Almonds** and ‘Plum’ **Rosins** - impaled on spikes *Fruits of the Earth*
- The **Red Ribbon** - tied around the candle (ideal but not always practical) *The Blood of Jesus*
- The **Tall White Candle** *Christ, the Light of the World*

One of my earliest and most treasured memories is of a Christingle Service for members’ children held in the Guild Room of the Sisters’ House adjacent to the Church in St. Peter’s Street at Christmas in 1934 and my wonderment as trays of lighted Christingles were carried into the darkened room. Later the services were opened up to include the children attending Sunday school and their friends, which were held in the church.

During my childhood, Christmas began with the traditional Christmas Eve Lovefeast, complete with tea and currant buns! We sang carols and, in turn, recited Christmas poems or passages from the biblical accounts of Jesus’ birth. The highest point was the distribution of Christingles, presented to each child as a gift. Within the darkened Church the pin-points of light from the Christingles stood out like stars in the night sky and the Advent Star in the apse seemed to shine more brightly with the singing of the hymn especially associated with the Christingle:

<p><b>Morning Star, O cheering sight! Ere thou cam'st, how dark earth's night! Jesus mine, in me shine; in me shine, Fill my heart with light divine.</b></p>	<p><b>Morning Star, thy glory bright Far excels the sun's clear light. Jesus be, Constantly, More than thousand suns to me.</b></p>
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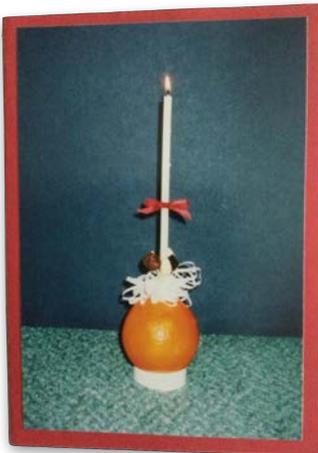
**Thy glad beams, thou Morning Star,  
Cheer the nations near and far;  
Thee we own,  
Lord alone,  
Man's Great Saviour, God's dear Son.**

**Morning Star, my soul's true light  
Tarry not, dispel my night;  
Jesus mine,  
In me shine;  
Fill my heart with light divine.**

*1657 J. Scheffler. Tr. 1885 B. Harvey*

Click to hear: [Morning Star, O cheering sight!](#)

Within our home, like the children of Marienborn, my brothers (Frank and John) and I climbed the stairs to go happily to bed by Christingle light. The breakfast table on Christmas Day was similarly illuminated. The slender candles were long lasting being nearly a foot tall.



My own fascination with the making of Christingles was aroused at a very early age as my paternal Grandma and my Auntie Daisy, who taught me art, would spend the days leading up to Christmas preparing the goose quills and cutting the ruffs for dozens of Christingles.

Comparatively recently the Christingle has been adopted by other Christian denominations and organisations outside the Moravian Church and new variations have arisen: for example, cocktail sticks are substituted for goose quills (being more easily obtained and requiring no preparation), the white ruff is omitted and the fruits are replaced by sweets, with the consequent loss or change of the original symbolism. However, the constant element, the humble candle, given special significance, remains a powerful symbol of God's gift of His only Son, Jesus Christ, the Light of the World, our Saviour.

The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. *John 1 v 4*

Jesus said "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life. *John 8 v 12*

## **Gwen Gribble**

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### **Janice Griffiths writes:**

I wonder how many of you are like me, looking to Christmas with confusion and a slight sense of disappointment instead of the usual joyous anticipation? Let me explain; with our family can we or can't we meet? As both daughters are separated from husbands it brings extra families into the equation when deciding if we were allowed to meet, obviously not all together, but if some are meeting together one day are we allowed to meet with our daughters and grandchildren another day, oh, what a headache!! Shall we just spend Christmas on our own Evan? But then I'd like to see the grandchildren and anyway, Boris might still cancel it all! Then again, our lovely carol services and exchanging greetings with dear friends will be so difficult.

At the end of our Sunday worship today on the radio the minister said that one of the hardest things to cope with was not being able to shake hands with people, hug friends and kiss relatives. Now ain't that the truth, oh well I guess we must be patient and believe it will come good in the end, knowing God will not let us suffer more than we can cope with. I will still try Lord, but I am finding its tedious. Anyone else??

## **Janice**

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### Jean Kenyon writes:

First of all let me say a big thank you to all of you engaged with the writing and organising of the News Letter and the Sunday Service sheets. You are all doing a great job at a time when we most need it.

I was disappointed, however, to read the news of the Museum. I read that John Bunyan is the key figure at the heart of it. I feel quite sure that Bunyan himself would be the last to say that. His whole heart and life were devoted to the furtherance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Surely, Jesus Christ has to be at the heart of our Museum as we tell the story of John Bunyan, His faithful servant. Yes, we are thankful for the inspiring writings and insights of Bunyan and others and it is right to remember them. But nothing can compare with the love and sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the key figure at the centre of our faith and of our Museum.

May God bless you all and keep you well and healthy at this time.

**Jean**

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### Christmas Time



What do I want for Christmas? Nothing really, I have all I need, I do want the trimmings though. On the 1st December I will put the Christmas tree up, not just for my three grandchildren aged between 10 and 4, but for me as I love the festive season. My music tastes vary from Shirley Bassey to Puccini but although Carols from Kings is a little heavy for me, I will be playing children singing Christmas carols whilst I place the angel on the tree.

My son usually gets the children to give me a goodie bag with some crisps, a miniature bottle of wine and a packet of biscuits so they can give me something before I give them theirs. I can then spend the morning watching their smiling faces.

I do send Christmas cards out, not by email but by post, and often to someone I haven't seen in the past year, and I am not using Covid as an excuse for that. As we move where we live we always promise to keep in touch with friends we have made, but as the years roll by and we make new ones some inevitably fade into the past. That said, it is a time to reunite and rather than just say Happy Christmas, I always pen a bit more, explaining what I have done over the last year and the changes I have made. Occasionally one or more will get back in touch.

Sadly we won't have the school Nativity play this year with the children and hopefully the Christmas Eve booze ups will be curtailed, but the spirit of Christmas will still be there. Even for those who are not as devout as they once were, it's the spirit of giving that is important, it's a time we think of someone else and that comes within the meaning of Christianity, does it not? And let's not forget Father Christmas has been given special key worker status.

So have a happy Christmas and as I end all correspondence, keep safe.

**Ken Thomas**

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## Bedford Food Bank

Dear Supporters,

Many thanks for your continued support this year. The last two months have seen us feed over 800 people giving out over 10 tonnes of food.

The list of items that we are currently requiring are :



UHT Fruit Juice  
Tinned Chicken meat ( small tins)  
Long Life Sponge Puddings  
Tinned Rice Pudding  
Tinned Spaghetti Hoops  
Toothbrushes  
Toothpaste  
Tea 40 or 80 packs

Tinned Vegetables  
Coffee  
Anti bac cleaning spray  
Shampoo  
Shower gel  
Washing up liquid  
Laundry tablets.

Thank you for your support. Please see the website or telephone for further guidance on how to give food or donations. Gifts of food can be left in the church foyer on a Sunday or in the foyer by the church office during the week.

<https://bedford.foodbank.org.uk>

or by telephone - **01234 268569**

To donate by post, please make cheques payable to 'Bedford Food Bank' and send them to - 71 Murdock Road, Manton Industrial Estate, Bedford MK41 7PL

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## Christmas Quiz

Covid or no covid the Bunyan Christmas Quiz must go on. **A copy of the quiz is attached to this News Letter and is available on the [church website](#).** A generous five weeks to find the answers this year so some high scores are expected. There will be prizes for the best.

Contributions to church funds will be most welcome.

Please return your answers to us. Details on the quiz sheet.

**Mary and Kenneth Davies**

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## Michael and Gunilla Austin write:

Thank you for another heart-warming and informative News Letter. Let's hope that the situation will improve and allow us to visit Bedford again next year.

Best wishes,

**Michael and Gunilla**

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## Bunyan Postal Service (BPS)

For the first time in many a decade BPS will not be operating this year, another victim of Covid-19. As was mentioned in last week's Church Meeting, a page will be set aside in the newsletter for Christmas greetings, with a request that a donation is pledged for **Smartcjs, Prebend Street**. Over the years our annual Christmas donation has steadily risen to over £500, so, please donate what you can, and GiftAid when possible.



Donations can be either made directly through their website SMART Prebend Centre - SMART [smartejs.org.uk](http://smartejs.org.uk) - may be sent in to the Church Office, placed in an envelope marked Christmas Card Appeal in the offering box at a Sunday Service.

Christmas greeting will appear in a special Christmas edition of our News Letter on December 20th. Your Christmas greeting can be sent to our minister by email: [chrisdamp@mac.com](mailto:chrisdamp@mac.com) or to the church office. Deadline for this News Letter will be Wednesday 16th December.

Thanking you in advance

**Brian & Brenda Cornish**

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### A Rhyme for the Times

*Christmas is coming  
The geese are getting fat  
Please put a billion pounds in Rishi Sunak's cap  
If you haven't got a billion, a single pound will do  
If you haven't got that single pound,  
Then please read on ...*



Back in the mists of time that is the history of Bunyan Meeting, some of our benefactors left bequests in their wills with very specific conditions attached in that those bequests were for the poor of the Church, either to be given out as cash grants or to provide the poor with a loaf of bread at certain times of the year. Over time these funds became known as the 11 charities and even today those monies are still being used.

As part of the recent updates to the Trust Deed, the 11 charities were rolled up into the Bunyan Trust Welfare Fund, from which grants may be made to anyone who is in financial need.

If there is anyone reading this who finds themselves in genuine hardship, please let our Minister know. Usually the grants are quite small, but in exceptional circumstances extra help can be made available.

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### November Church Meeting

At our November Church Meeting we elect church Officers and representatives and adopt our accounts.

This year we have re-established our Finance and Admin. Group which brings together the Minister, Chair of Trustees, the Secretary and Treasurer of both the Church and Trust and a Representative of the Museum and the Basement. This group had been replaced two years ago by holding more regular joint meetings of the Deacons and Trustees, but it was felt that the smaller Finance and Admin. Group had worked better in the past and so would replace the joint meetings.

After the Church and Trust accounts were formally adopted the Church Treasurer reported on the financial situation facing the church. If we cannot reopen our buildings for hire and some of our usual activities during 2021, the church will face a deficit in the region of £33,000.

Our Church Care and Safety Policy had been amended and was approved. A new draft policy is to be circulated by the Congregational Federation during the next few months,

so an updated Care and Safety Policy based upon the new draft policy will be adopted during 2021.

It was agreed that we open the church for services as soon as the Government allow face to face worship and the times and dates of our Christmas Services were agreed.

Our cleaning and care taking staff are still on 80% furlough but when we are able to reopen the buildings more fully, their working hours will be increased.

We heard from our Trustees that the sale of two investment properties are due to take place in the near future and that the installation of new lighting and the redecoration of the church will take place in the early part of next year.

Our next **Church Meeting** will be held via zoom on **January 27th at 7.30pm.**

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### The BMS Birthday Scheme

If you wish to support the BMS through their Birthday Scheme, please contact Margaret Ormerod. It's a great way to celebrate a birthday. Thank you for your support.



This week **Vee Wingate, Allan Linger** and **Myra Powell** celebrate their birthdays.

Members of the Scheme can make donations online at [bmsworldmission.org](http://bmsworldmission.org) quoting our church reference number which is 7. Or you can send your donation to Margaret Ormerod at 32, Wheathouse Close, Bedford. MK41 8JX. Or if you are attending our services in church, you may hand it to me there.

Many thanks **Margaret**

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### Audrey Mehew writes:

Thank you once again for a lovely service today on line. I found it very moving and do appreciate how much time it must take each week. I have kept all the services on my computer.

My friend Anne Stringer from Oakley who used to come with me to the Friendship Group meetings was walking in Oakley in the week, tripped and broke her wrist! Fortunately her husband is still alive and she has family in Bromham but it was a nasty experience for her, particularly coming up to Christmas.

I also listened in to the Church Meeting on Wednesday. Much appreciated.

**Audrey**

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### Daily Hope - 0800 804 8044

Daily Hope offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line.

The line – which is available 24 hours a day on **0800 804 8044** – has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions in mind.

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### For Your Prayers

Please remember **Heather Caves**; and **Heather Maull & her family**, following the death of her husband Ray.

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# DECEMBER ONLINE BUNYAN HIDDEN HIGHLIGHTS

Join us during December for a series of short talks on objects from the Museum, or further afield, for Advent. Talks are 3-5 minutes, accessible FREE from the Friends, Museum, or Bunyan Meeting Church website or Facebook pages. Go to <https://www.bunyanmeeting.co.uk/> and follow the links. There will be four talks, on Wednesdays at 12.30pm and 6.30pm (the same talks). Talks will be accessible until the end of December and then move to a dedicated page on the museum website.

**Wed 2nd December**  
12.30pm and 6.30 pm



**Blue Plaques to John Bunyan,**  
by Helen Kennedy

**Wed 9th December**  
12.30pm and 6.30 pm



**John Bunyan's Anvil,**  
by  
John Pestell

**Wed 16th December**  
12.30pm and 6.30 pm



**Lighting the home in John Bunyan's time,**  
by Janet Wootton

**Wed 23rd December**  
12.30pm and 6.30 pm



**John Bunyan's Tombstone,**  
by Christopher Damp

Link to the Bunyan Meeting website: <https://www.bunyanmeeting.co.uk>



**Bunyan Meeting**

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email [bunyanmeeting@gmail.com](mailto:bunyanmeeting@gmail.com)

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