

St Barnabas United Church and Christian Centre

Kingfisher Drive, Eastbourne

BN23 7RL



The Broadway United Church
The Broadway, Lindfield Road,
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www.broadwayunitedchurch.co.uk

A monthly magazine for two churches in the Central Sussex United Area

The United Messenger

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Mick Mulley *Editor*

2026

Team Ministers:

Rev'd Memona Shahbaz *(01323 739785) and* Jonathan Gaylord

From the editor...

WELCOME TO the Christmas edition of your church magazine.

Thank you for your support during the year with your contributions and photos.

If your event is not showing in this magazine, have you told me about it?

Mick



Sundays of the Month

6th December -	2nd Sunday of Advent
13th December -	3rd Sunday of Advent
20th December -	4th Sunday of Advent
27th December -	1st Sunday of Christmas

Contributions for **January's** magazine should be with me by:

Friday 18th December please. Thank you.

Thoughts and opinions expressed in this magazine belong solely to the author, and not necessarily those shared by Broadway Church, St Barnabas Church, ministers or the editor.

Dear Church Family

"*O come all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant…"*
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2027!

AS WE celebrate the wonderful season of Christmas, may we be reminded once again of the greatest gift of all – the birth of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. It is a time to reflect on God's love, grace and faithfulness, and to give thanks for the blessing of sharing our journey of faith together as a church family. May the peace and joy of Christ fill your hearts and homes, bringing hope, comfort and renewed faith. Wishing you and your loved ones a truly blessed and joyful Christmas, and may God's abundant blessings be with you throughout the coming New Year.

What makes Christmas so special? Is it the beautiful decorations, the delicious food, the carols, the presents under the tree or the joy of spending time with family and friends? All these things bring happiness, but there is something far more precious that we must never forget ,
Jesus, God's greatest gift to the whole world!

At Christmas, we love exchanging presents. We carefully choose gifts for those we love, wrap them beautifully and enjoy giving and receiving them. But have we ever stopped to think about the very first Christmas gift?

God gave us His only Son! As John 3:16 reminds us, *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son."*

Jesus came into our world as a little baby, born in a humble manger in Bethlehem. The King of Kings came not into a palace but into a stable, bringing hope, love, forgiveness and salvation to all.

The wise men travelled a great distance to find Jesus. When they saw Him, they bowed down and worshipped Him, presenting their precious gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh (Matthew 2:11).

What a beautiful example for us! As we gather with family and friends this Christmas, enjoying fellowship, sharing meals and exchanging presents, let us remember the One whose birth we celebrate.

If we bring gifts to those we love on their birthdays, surely it is fitting that we bring a gift to the King of Kings! But what can we give

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to the One who owns everything?

We can give Him our hearts, our lives, our love and our worship. We can offer Him our time, our obedience and a willingness to follow Him.

So, this Christmas, let us ask ourselves: **What gift will I bring to Jesus?**

Christmas is also a time when we remember loved ones who are no longer with us. For some, there may be an empty chair at the table and a special voice that we long to hear again. Let us remember those who are grieving, lonely or finding this season difficult. May the love and comfort of Jesus surround them, reminding them that they are never forgotten by God.

As we celebrate Christmas and look towards a new year, may we never become so busy with the celebrations that we forget Christ. Let us make room for Him in our hearts and allow His love to shine through us.

Thank you for being such a precious part of our church family. May God bless you and your loved ones with a joyful, peaceful and Christ-centred Christmas.

Wishing you all a very blessed Christmas!

With love and every blessing,
Mona, and family

A Christmas Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for the greatest gift of all, Your Son Jesus Christ. Thank You for His love, His sacrifice and the hope He brings into our lives.

Lord, as we celebrate Christmas, help us to give You our hearts and lives afresh. May we share Your love, show kindness and care for one another.

We especially remember those who are grieving the loss of loved ones, those who are lonely, unwell or struggling. Surround them with Your comfort, strength and peace.

We pray for our troubled world. Where there is hatred, bring love; where there is conflict, bring peace; where there is suffering, bring healing and hope. Bless the nations and guide our leaders towards wisdom, justice and reconciliation.

Bless our church family and our homes this Christmas. May the light of Jesus shine

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St Barnabas Church

INFORMAL BIBLE STUDY 26

AT ST Barnabas our very informal meeting continues each Friday at 11am for an hour.

We've read through Acts, James, Philemon and Galatians together since Lent.

During December we plan an Advent theme

New people have recently joined us; sometimes up to eight in the group - always room for more.

Not everyone is able to come every week but anyone who does come is very welcome to just turn up.

I can be contacted on 07891788867

Hazel





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brightly in us today and throughout the coming year.

In the precious name of Jesus, our greatest gift, we pray.
Amen



🙏

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Mona



A trip to listen to Rev'd J.John

THE WEATHER had just turned from a balmy October to a freezing cold snap when Dad and I drove to Felixstowe in Suffolk for a Preachers Workshop with talented evangelist, author and reverend, J.John.

He has been preaching and bringing the Bible to life for decades. He uses everyday experiences and his own quirky brand of humour to make his message clear and memorable.



Rev'd J. John

You might have seen his one-minute sermons on Facebook. He loves Christmas and says its a good time to share hope with prople. 'Being a Christian means relying on Christ,' he says. 'If you take Christ out of Christmas, you are left with Ian and Ian isn't going to be much help.

' If you take Christ out of Christmas you're left with M&S, but its about more than shopping'

He reminded leaders of 12 C's - principles that should underlie our message. Talks should be Christ-centred, and preached with Conviction, Clarity, Compassion, Creativity, Credibility, Courage, with scriptural Content; build Connection and Curiosity and should Commission hearers to go and spread good news.

J. John speaks openly and frankly using everyday language about heavenly themes. 'Christ isn't a footnote,' he said, He's the headline.'

His books were on sale at cost-price because he believed in strengthening people's faith, not making a profit.

One of his books is called ***Just 10,*** about the 10 Commandments. He preached over consecutive weeks in Liverpool as a city-wide outreach.

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Broadway Praise Singers

WE STILL meet on a Thursday morning at Broadway Church. Tea/ Coffee at 10 am (often with a slice of cake cooked by Suzanne) and singing at 10.30.

This year we have looked at 26 songs written by an Australian group called CityAlight.

Have A Happy Christmas



Example of cake that Suzanne makes

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They had an amnesty for people who were unable to return stolen items and received thousands of hotel dressing-gowns, library books and cash. in Liverpool when reflecting on Do not kill, in a weapons amnesty, they had guns and knives returned and needed two armoured vehicles to take the haul away.

'The gospel is unchanging,' he said. 'Let your commitment to it be unwavering.'

He is a funny man, humble and full of real joy.

We were delighted to see him in person. I was particularly pleased to see him, as he first met me as a teenager, when he visited Eastbourne Sixth Form College.

'Every sermon should echo what Jesus said, focus on our faith and offer hope for the world.'

Dawn

Treasurer's Report - Broadway

THE NOVEMBER Communion Collection for YMCA raised £79.50.

The December Collection will be for "ACTION FOR CHILDREN"

Please let me have your collection boxes for emptying before Christmas.

The Total for "GIFT DAY" is now £1,507.00 Thank You to all who donated.

The "Christmas Fair" raised the sum of £629.60 About £100 up on last year.

Well done for all the hard work of the stall Holders.

If you are NOT paying by Standing Order and giving cash, would you consider asking me for a "Bankers Order Form"?

May I wish you all a



Please join me at 37, Park Avenue on Saturday **9th January 2027** for a **New Year Coffee Morning** 10am - Noon.

John

Broadway United Church Birthdays

December 2026

9th	Mike Parkinson
15th	Stu Miller
19th	John Boakye



If your birthday is not listed please see June Phillips

East Team Churches

We are delighted to invite you to



Christmas Carol Singing

12th December at 2:30pm

At Langney Shopping Centre

BN23 7RT

Joe's Story - Truth is stranger than fiction

I WAS in love with the loveliest girl in the world and we were saving up to be married next year. She came into my workshop with some cake. I thought she looked a bit pale. She said she was expecting a baby. Bless her heart, so innocent, "We'll have lots of babies, My Love – once we're married," I said, "Your Mum will explain if you ask her".

She insisted she was pregnant NOW, but still a virgin, WHAT?

Then she was talking about seeing angels and some other weird stuff I didn't understand.

I don't know how I kept my voice down, but there could have been customers outside. "Listen Woman," I said urgently, "if you really are expecting, you know it's not mine. You must get out of this village – if this gets out you could be stoned to death!"

"I'll go and stay with my cousin", she said, "Will you take me?"

I've met her cousin, a lovely motherly lady, never had children of her own, ironic isn't it? And she's too old now, but she'll take care of Mary. And they live a bit out of the way, which is useful.

That leaves me with the bitter task of spending what I'd saved for our wedding, finding someone who can arrange a discreet, quiet divorce for us. That's right, I did say divorce. It may be different in your culture, but our betrothal was legally binding.

I can't think any further ahead than that. There is no future.

I saw Mary safely to her cousin's. I didn't say another word to her. I didn't go in.

It was a weary journey back. When I got home I was shattered. I was asleep before I could get undressed.

Then in my dream I see a real angel! – A messenger from God!

He came to the point – "Yes you are dreaming but Yes it's real and I am an angel"

"You are not going to die. You are not getting a divorce. You are going to stand by Mary and look after this baby. Don't be scared to Joseph –she hasn't been unfaithful"

He reminded me of what Isaiah had said...."a virgin will be with child.....", I never knew that

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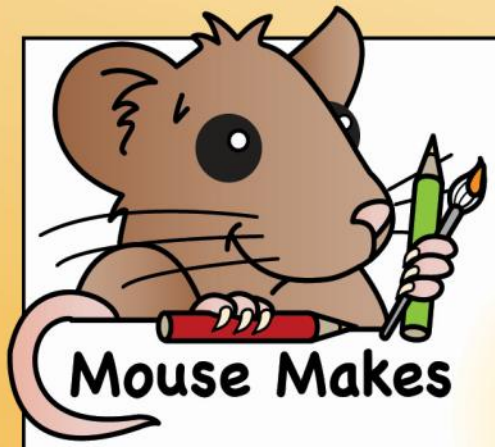

Mouse Makes

JESUS, LIGHT OF THE WORLD!
"The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world... to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name He gave the right to become children of God."
from John 1:9-12

HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

The Orange
- the world.
John 3:16

The Ribbon
- the blood of Jesus shed for us.
Matthew 26:28

The Fruit
- God's goodness and provision.
James 1:17

The Candle
- Christ light, Jesus, light of the world.
John 8:12

The Sticks
- God's love reaches out to the four corners of the world.
Psalm 139: v7-12





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was meant literally! “Too difficult for God?” he challenged.

Before I woke he added, “One step at a time Joseph. Just keep trusting in God – both of you. Tough times ahead. But you’ll be OK.”

Hazel Elrick

Ten Things you've always wondered about Christmas (but didn't like to ask)

1. Why do we keep Christmas on 25 December?

Christmas is what is known as a fixed or immovable feast, though Christ's birth has never been understood to have actually happened on 25th December. Around the year AD 200, the scholar Clement of Alexandria wondered if Jesus was born on 20th May (it would have been warmer then for the shepherds!) It is likely that the day of 25th December was chosen at Rome during the 4th century to provide a Christian alternative to a local pagan festival.

The birth of Jesus is commemorated each year in special carol services, the most famous of which is the 'Service of Nine Carol and Lessons' at King's College, Cambridge. The Nine Lessons (that is, readings from the Bible) are designed to trace the steady progress of God's work of redemption in the world, beginning with the call of Israel, and culminating in the coming of Jesus Christ.

2. Why do we have Christmas trees?

Prince Albert (Queen Victoria's husband) of Saxe-Cobourg brought over a tree and the custom from his native Germany. Many centuries before, the first Christian missionaries to Germany had discovered the pagans there worshipping the spirits who lived in trees. But ever since Adam and Eve, trees have been strong religious symbols.

3. If Joseph was not the father of Jesus, why is his family tree in the Bible, and not Mary's?

The first chapter of Matthew, the first 17 verses tells you exhaustively about Joseph's genealogy, and then Matthew immediately goes to describe how Jesus was born of a virgin - and not related to Joseph at all. So, what was Matthew up to?

Matthew was writing his gospel for the Jews, to show them that Jesus was the Messiah. And so he wanted to establish Jesus *legal* genealogy - which would have been important to the Jews. Legally, Jesus belonged to Joseph's family, and Matthew was saying what a 'pure' line this was - it stretched back to the royal fami-

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ly of David. Women's genealogies were not viewed as of the same importance, hence the lack of interest in Mary's family.

As for Jesus *actual* (though not legal) father, that was God - for He was 'conceived of the Holy Spirit'. Nowhere in the Bible is Joseph referred to as 'the father of Jesus', despite the numerous references to Mary as 'the mother of Jesus'

The verse in Matthew runs, according to the best Greek texts: *Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ*. That says it all.

4. Why was Jesus born at Bethlehem?

Because His mother was there at the time! But this is a moment when human plans and divine purposes interweave. The human thread was the famous 'census'; bureaucracy is not a 20th century invention. If the population must be counted, we can't make exceptions for one village carpenter and his teenage bride.

But Bethlehem was where great King David had been born, and the prophets had foretold that from Bethlehem one day would come the Messiah. This is why later, when people met Jesus 'of Nazareth' they wondered how He could be the Messiah.

5. What exactly are swaddling clothes?

Simply long strips of cloth to wrap round a tiny baby, keeping him warm, snug and secure.

6. Can we really believe that the shepherds saw angels that night?

Luke 2 highlights the shining glory of God, not a detailed description of supernatural beings. Yet thousands of people down the centuries have claimed to see angels. And at this supreme moment in history, when God became Man, why shouldn't a glimpse of heavenly glory shine down on earth?

7. What was His star that the three kings saw?

The Bible nowhere says there were three kings. 'Magi' is all we get, and we know they studied the stars. Serious astronomers have calculated that the 'star of Bethlehem' could well have been a comet. Or a planetary conjunction. Or a temporary, exploding 'nova'. or....? The magi saw the star 'at its rising', and whatever that means exactly, it all happened well after

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Christmas.

8. What use to a baby are gold, frankincense and myrrh?

The presents are symbols of what Jesus was here to do. Gold? clearly for a king. Frankincense? this was used in sacrifice, and Jesus on the Cross would offer Himself as the supreme sacrifice. As for myrrh, this was used in death, but was also a lover's gift, a present of joy. Could it possibly hint at both?

9. Where was Christ before He was conceived?

Before our conception, we were nowhere. But not Jesus. John puts it strikingly: "In the beginning was the Word...the Word was with God and the Word was God." - leading to the punch-line "The Word became flesh, and lived for a while among us. We have seen His glory." Jesus' own words often reflect this dimension: He comes from the Father and is going to the Father; the Bible never gets sentimental over the baby. It requires us to honour God's eternal Son.

10. Why can't Christmas merge with other faiths for one great festival?

This hardly shows much respect for Christianity, never mind other religions. It's not much of a favour to our Muslim or Hindu friends to insist that they merge with us because we really believe the same. That might not go down too well in the local synagogue either! By mixing up the religious brew, we are not being honest with any of the religions. Jesus arrived in this world making devastating claims - whether you believe them or not, they stand on their own, and do not mix with any other faith. †

"Thanks very much for the beautiful jumper," said Charles, kissing his grandmother dutifully on the cheek.

"Oh, there's really nothing to thank me for," she murmured.

"That's what I thought, but Mum said I had to."

Broadway United Church

Broadway Mews, Lindfield Road, Hampden Park

is opening its door for a

Friendship & Prayer Day

Monday 7th December 2026

10am - 3pm

Set time aside to reflect on Christmas before the season overtakes us, whether it's for 5 minutes or couple of hours.

- There will be quiet areas for contemplating
- Areas for writing (Christmas cards or a letter to a friend)
- Refreshments and mince pies at anytime
- Christmas crafts
- Word searches
- Or just chat

Everyone will be welcome

St Barnabas Church

Coffee Morning

Saturday

5th December 2026

From 10am

Over Christmas

I asked a friend of mine what he would be doing over Christmas. He said he reckoned he would be busy with "aqua-thermal heat treatment of ceramics, aluminium, and steel in a constrained environment."

I was astonished – and baffled. In further conversation, I learned that he would be washing the plates, pots and pans with hot water, under his wife's supervision.

Community Lunch - Broadway

Christmas dinner:

Wednesday 2nd December 2026

Time: **12.45**

Invitation only

To book a meal ring Val on 01323 487990 All diets catered for

JD Hair Salon

16 The Broadway, Hampden Park

BN22 OAS

07722175570

(the salon is in Harmony Health)

Joanne Dzendzera

joannedze@gmail.com

Who's who at BROADWAY United Church

Elders:

Sue Sanders: Senior Elder
01323 505866
* Pulpit supply
* Catering Convener
* Link with Community Lunches
* Junior Church

Alison Flynn:
** Authorized person for weddings*

Sue Miller
* Pianist

Kath Shaw:
* Cradle Roll
* Bible Readers Coordinator

Ruth Rowland:
* Door stewards coordinator
* Link with Junior Church

Val Cornish

Stu Miller :
* Sound system

Denise Woodfin

People with other responsibilities:

John Donoghue
***** Church Treasurer
(01323 501857)
37 Park Avenue, Eastbourne BN21 2XG
Email: jndonoghue38@gmail.com

Pat Aisbitt:
* Letting Steward
buchurch21@gmail.com

Steve Waters:
* Church Council Secretary:
Email: bucms2024@gmail.com

Mick Mulley 07985 932783
* Worship Leader
* Weekly Newsletter,
* The United Messenger
(Monthly magazine)
* Broadway Praise Singers
* Website:
https://broadwayunitedchurch.co.uk
The Cottage
2 Levett Avenue
Polegate
BN26 6LW
Email: mjmulley@gmail.com

Jolly Pett 07743374887
***** Safeguarding Officer
broadwaychurchsafeguarding@gmail.com

ST BARNABAS Rota details for DECEMBER 2026

6th	Vestry:	**Janice Crompton**
	Corridor:	**Anne Weilding**
	D/Steward:	**Brenda Jenkins**
	Reader:	**Allie Bowles**
13th	Vestry:	**Pat Beeney**
	Corridor:	**Hazel Elrick**
	D/Steward:	**Clive Elrick**
	Reader:	**Brenda Jenkins**
20th	Vestry:	**Brenda Jenkins**
	Corridor:	**Clive Elrick**
	D/Steward:	**Anne Weilding**
	Reader:	**Hazel Elrick**
27th	Vestry:	**Allie Bowles**
	Corridor:	**Janice Crompton**
	D/Steward:	**Hazel Elrick**
	Reader:	**Anne Weilding**

If you are unable to fulfil your duty please arrange to change with someone else. Thank you.



A Happy Christmas to all

Who's who at ST BARNABAS Church

Church Secretary:

Janice Crompton 01323 639042

Email: jancrompton@hotmail.com

Lettings * Property * Preachers Coordinator

* * * * * * *

Treasurer:

Janice Crompton 01323 639042

Email: jancrompton@hotmail.com

Catering Convenor * Safeguarding Officer

"Make Lunch" link

* * * * * * *

Church Councillors:

Val Attwood **Allie Bowles** **Shon Shahbaz**

* * * * * * *

Brenda Jenkins

01323 763249

Readers/ Stewards Rota Coordinator * Worship Leader

Services at St Barnabas for DECEMBER (09.45am)

6th	Rev'd Keith Morrison
13th	Rev'd David Hague
20th	Gillian Wood
24th	*United Service at Emmanuel - 11.15*
25th	Rev'd Memona Shahbaz - *10am*
27th	Rev'd Memona Shahbaz - *Communion*

Services at Broadway for DECEMBER (10am)

6th	Dr Dawn Mulley - *Nativity AAW*
13th	Rev'd Memona Shahbaz - *Communion*
20th	Rev'd Brian Wightwick - *Carols*
24th	*United Service at Emmanuel Church - 11.15*
25th	*United Christmas Service at St Barna*bas - *10am*
27th	Rev'd Jonathan Gaylord

ELDERS - December 2026		DOOR ROTA	
6th	Alison and Denise	6th	Sandra
13th	Ruth and Sue Sanders	13th	Pat
20th	Kath and Val	20th	Glynis
27th	Kath and Stu	27th	Maggie