

# InTouch

Winter 2023-24



The magazine of  
Fleet United Reformed Church



# FLEET UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

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**YouTube** Fleet United Reformed Church

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## WEEKLY WORSHIP

Sundays, 10 am: Family Worship

Holy Communion usually on third Sunday of month

An afternoon service is held at 2 pm on the last Tuesday of the month

## REGULAR ACTIVITIES

<i>'Footsteps' Young People's Group:</i>	Sundays, 10 am ( <i>term time only</i> )
<i>Pilates</i>	Mondays, 12.15-1.15 pm
<i>Coffee Morning:</i>	Wednesdays, 10–11.30 am
<i>Toddlers Group:</i>	Fridays, 10 am

Under the umbrella of the United Reformed Church, *Guide*, *Brownie* and *Rainbow Units* meet each week during school term.

Up to date details of all the above activities are available from the Church Office, from the Church Secretary, or on our website.

## A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM OUR MINISTER



*Dear Friends,*

Advent is here! I love counting down the days of Advent as much now as I did as a child, with the beautiful advent calendars sent to me by my aunties. This year I have a reflective Advent calendar which is designed to be photographed and shared. So each day I will send a reading beautifully presented on a postcard, and you can read it either via email or WhatsApp, or the website or Facebook. I could also print out some copies for those who cannot access it by phone

or social media. I hope that by this we will be blessed during this journey through the waiting time until we celebrate Jesus' birth.

Advent today is often a frantic time making preparations and plans, wondering where the time goes. That is part of our life as it is—but it was the same for Mary as she tried to prepare for the birth of her baby, and Joseph as he had to take her on a journey away from her family. Our Christmas doesn't have to be perfect—just a place of welcome in our hearts for Jesus, and prayers for all who find themselves homeless or refugees at this time.

This year I will be leading a quiet Christmas service on 10th December at 3 pm for all who need a little space away from the celebrations because they may not feel very joyful this year. Come to experience a quiet and reflective time of readings and prayers with gentle music.

Our Carol and Christingle service will be on 17th December at 4 pm, suitable for all the family. And we will have a celebration service on Christmas Day at 10 am.

During Advent I hope to explore God's gift of Jesus, so we might reflect together on what God did on that first Christmas and what God continues to offer us in Jesus today. Jesus was given to everyone, a precious and blessed gift, which does not wear out or get broken. As the carol says, *Love came down at Christmas*—a gift we can share with everyone, a blessing from God through us to all.

Have a blessed Christmas,

*Helen*



## AUTUMN FAIR THANKS



*(Above) Carol presents a cheque to  
Phyllis Tuckwell representatives  
Sue Hickey & Elizabeth Cook*

A big 'thank you' to everyone who helped in any way with this year's Autumn Fair. Once again it was a huge success, with several new exhibitors who have asked to come back next year.

We were able to support the Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice with a donation of £545, for which they are very grateful.

Once again, many thanks to you all.

*Carol Rayner*



## CHRISTMAS GIFT SUNDAY

Our Gift and Parade Service this year will be on **Sunday, 3rd December at 10 am**, and will be led by our Minister. All gifts, including gifts of money, will go to *Parity for Disability*, a local charity which supports adults with multiple disabilities. Emma Nelson, their community fundraiser, explains more about their work:

'When people with multiple disabilities finish school, the future can seem bleak. Through *Parity's* award-winning services, people aged 18+ engage in chosen activities, build friendships and networks, use and develop skills, contribute to their community—in fact, do what everyone else is doing. Without *Parity* they would face isolation, deterioration and the loss of the skills and abilities they have. We must raise over £100,000 this year to keep our vital services going. You can learn more at [www.parityfordisability.org.uk](http://www.parityfordisability.org.uk).

'We have suggested art and craft materials as ideal gifts as this is something that is constantly in use within the day services. Alternatively, chocolate and biscuits are always welcome and put a smile not just on our students' faces, but our key workers' as well.

'Our Chairman, Owen Durrett, will be attending this year's service at Fleet URC on *Parity's* behalf, and is looking forward to seeing you all.'

*Emma Nelson, Parity Community Fundraiser*





## FLEET UNITED REFORMED CHURCH



### ADVENT & CHRISTMAS SERVICES 2023

Everyone is warmly invited to join us for any  
or all of our Advent & Christmas services.

We look forward to welcoming you!

All services will be led by our Minister, Revd Helen Everard,  
unless stated otherwise

#### **Sunday 3rd December—1st Sunday in Advent**

**10 am: Christmas Gift Service, with Parade for Rainbows, Brownies  
& Guides.** Gifts will be donated to *Parity for Disability*.

#### **Sunday 10th December—2nd Sunday in Advent**

**10 am: Family Worship** led by Mr Paul Murphy.

**3 pm: Quiet Christmas Service**

A more reflective service for those who find Christmas a difficult time  
of year, with music, readings and prayers.

#### **Sunday 17th December—3rd Sunday in Advent**

**10 am: Family Worship with Holy Communion**

**4 pm: Carols & Christingles Service**

#### **Tuesday 19th December—Afternoon Service**

**2 pm: A Service of Carols and Communion**

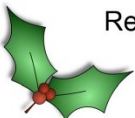
#### **Sunday 24th December—4th Sunday in Advent**

**10 am: Christmas Eve Service** led by Mrs Karen Smith.

#### **Monday 25th December—Christmas Day**

**10 am: A Christmas Day celebration,**

Refreshments will be served in the church hall after all  
services, **except on 24th & 25th December.**  
Please join us for a further time of fellowship.





## CURRY NIGHT VOTED A GREAT SUCCESS

Our latest Curry night held to raise funds for Palani Mission was exceptionally well supported, with over 80 guests enjoying Saju's excellent cuisine. There was a plentiful supply of food, as always, with canapes followed by main courses of Lamb Biryani, Malai Chicken Tikka, Aloo Palakhi and Vegetable Poryal, all served with a variety of accompaniments. For dessert there was mango pannacotta, melon and pineapple. Although the food is always delicious, many said that this was our 'best ever' curry evening.

Sheela Stephen, a member of our congregation who herself comes from Tamil Nadu, set our evening off to a good start with a prayer in her native Tamil.

A raffle of donated prizes was held for the first time, which proved very popular and contributed £276 to the grand total of over £2,000 which has been transferred to the Mission. This money will go to support the training of a community nurse and an engineer in Palani.

Our grateful thanks to the Mathew family for their talent and all their hard work, and to everyone else who contributed to the evening being such a great success.

*John Gibbons*





## FUN QUIZ

**Saturday, 23rd March 2024**

Save the date for a Fun Family Quiz evening — everyone welcome!

More details to come.



## NOTICE BOARD

## FAMILY CHRISTMAS FUN MORNING

**Tuesday, 19th December 2023, 10-11.30 am**

Children 0-11 with an adult welcome to come and have fun, with games, toys, songs and craft, all about the First Christmas.

(If you can help with this, please let me know—*Helen*)



## PRAYER AT FLEET URC

In the New Year the Elders and I are looking to have a monthly prayer time in the church. We are also hoping to make a space for people to place prayer requests in the foyer of the church. These requests will be prayed for at the prayer time. To safeguard those requesting prayer, we will need to devise a way these requests can be shared in compliance with GDPR legislation.

So look out for notices, and come to Church Meeting in the New Year! (7th January 2024) - *Helen*



## PILATES AT FLEET URC

The last class for this session will be held on **4th December**.

New session begins on **Monday, 8th January, 12.15—1.15 pm.**

Join us at our fun and friendly class—all abilities welcome.



**Please note:** Contributions are invited for the Spring issue of *InTouch* magazine (March—May 2024)

Please send them to the editor, Christine Gibbons, by **18th February**. Thank you.

([christine.gibbons@beech-ride.co.uk](mailto:christine.gibbons@beech-ride.co.uk))

## MY OCEAN STARS TRIP TO SRI LANKA

As many of you know, I was lucky enough to take part in a school trip to Sri Lanka in October with a local charity called Ocean Stars Trust. It was a wonderful experience visiting such a lovely place, where everything from the climate to the wildlife to the people is so very different from here in Britain.

The main purpose of the trip was to visit Sri Lankan schools linked to Ocean Stars, where we ran activities for the children and handed over resources that had been bought for them with the money we had raised as a group. Most of the schools we visited were in a town called Batticaloa, which is on the east coast of the island and was badly damaged in the 2004 tsunami. It was amazing to work with such lovely children and see how grateful they were to see us. We also had a friendly cricket match with a school in Kandy and attended a sports day at one school.



At the end of our week in Batticaloa, all of the schools we had visited, and some others too, came to an Ocean Stars variety show, where they performed some amazing cultural dances and music. Five schools have in the past received samba drums through Ocean Stars fundraising and we were lucky enough to see them all playing for us with great enjoyment.

Another event we attended was a celebration evening with all the children who are sponsored by Ocean Stars, and their families. Everyone got stuck into the activities we had prepared, which was wonderful to see. Overall, the charity part of the trip was a life-changing experience, and I will never forget the happiness and fun times I have shared with the children of Sri Lanka.



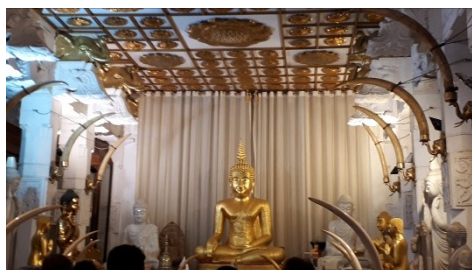
The rest of the trip was devoted to experiencing the culture and seeing the sights that Sri Lanka has to offer. We visited three Buddhist temples and two Hindu temples, one of which was a ruin and had been destroyed in the tsunami of 2004. It was wonderful to see how people live and base their lives around religions we do not see much of in Britain. It was also very



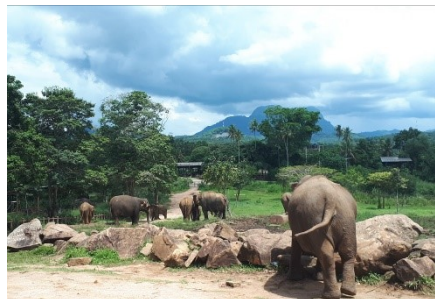
interesting to learn more about the religions themselves. One day we caught a train to Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage, where we saw young elephants and had the opportunity to feed one! We also went on a jeep safari and saw wild elephants, a hummingbird, eagles and peacocks. The wildlife in Sri Lanka was beautiful, including wild deer, intricately patterned butterflies, and jellyfish that lived in the lagoon in Batticaloa. The food was delicious, with a variety of curries and rice, which we ate for breakfast, lunch and dinner, and the climate was hot and humid. As a result, we got to see many palm trees, eat tropical fruits, and visit a spice garden inside a jungle. It was a brilliant and beautiful place to stay, with spectacular views of mountains in Kandy and the Indian Ocean in coastal regions.

A huge thank you to everyone who has supported me in my fundraising prior to this trip. I loved seeing where the money went and how positively it impacted the people of Sri Lanka on a personal level. I raised a total of £3343.42, £164.00 of which came from 'Save your Silver'. As a group at school, we raised £16,700! This money went towards finishing a half-built pre-school, buying samba drums for a different school, supporting feeding programs for families who can't afford enough food, and providing basic resources such as toothbrushes and toothpaste to Ocean Stars sponsor children. Again, thank you for your generous contributions – they are appreciated very highly in Sri Lanka!

*Alice Bagshaw*



*Buddhist Temple Inside & Out*



*Elephants and Deer*

## GOD'S WONDERFUL WORLD—SUNFLOWERS

*A reminder of warmer days*

There is one flower that to me means summer, and that is the sunflower.

In Greek mythology there is a story of the maiden who fell in love with the Sun God, Apollo. Every time he passed overhead in his fiery sun chariot she stood in her garden and gazed at him longingly, even though she had chores and tasks to attend to. Apollo eventually got fed up with the girl's foolishness. He flung one of his sun arrows at her, and she turned into a sunflower on the spot—always following the path of the sun.

In many traditions sunflowers are seen as symbols of good luck. Planting them around your home and garden will bring fortune your way. It is also said that if you pick a sunflower at sunset, then wear it on your person, it will bring you good luck the following day.

Sunflowers are often associated with truth, loyalty and honesty. If you want to know the truth about something, sleep with a sunflower under your pillow—and the next day, before the sun goes down, the truth should be revealed to you. The reason a sunflower is considered a flower of loyalty is because day after day it follows the sun, from east to west. Some stories say that slipping a bit of sunflower oil or seeds into someone's food or drink will cause them to be loyal to you.



Not only do sunflowers resemble miniature suns, their blooms also follow the sun across the sky. This is referred to as heliotropism. They have their own biological clocks which help them to follow the sun as it moves from east to west during the day, and then move back to their original position at night. However they only do this as young plants, as it helps them to grow properly. Once fully grown, they stay facing east as this attracts bees and other pollinators.

Amazingly, sunflowers have a remarkable ability to absorb toxins, including toxic metals and radiation. For example, following nuclear disasters such as Chernobyl and Fukushima, scientists planted millions of sunflowers to help the land recover; and they have also been planted in areas with high concentrations of lead.

There is a beautiful sunflower story that when it is cloudy and grey sunflowers face each other and share their energy—give each other a 'hug' in other words. Wow! Imagine if people would do this too! Sadly, in doing some fact-checking, it seems that this is not true. But, you know what, I will continue to believe this! What do you think?

*'Like a sunflower that follows every movement of the sun, so I turn to you, my God.'*

*Darrell Henderson*



## READINGS AND CAROLS FOR CHRISTMAS

Sunday, 3rd December at 3 pm

All Saints Church,  
Church Road

Free Entry + Tea  
Donations to Christian Aid



## ***fleet Orchestra*** **Concert**

Community Orchestra in Fleet, Hampshire

Wednesday, 13th December, at 8 pm

*Featuring music by Beethoven, Bach, Schubert,  
Tchaikovsky, Rodgers & Hammerstein*

Ss Philip and James  
Kings Road

Retiring collection for  
Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice



Phyllis  
Tuckwell  
Hospice

## Christmas Concerts & Celebrations



## Fleet URC **CAROLS AND CHRISTINGLES**

Led by Revd Helen Everard  
Sunday 17th December, 4 pm  
Everyone Welcome

## CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

St Philip & St James Church, Kings Road

Friday 8th December, 4—7 pm

Saturday 9th December, 10 am—6 pm

Sunday, 10th December, 1.30—5 pm

*Proceeds to Local Charities, Parish Funds,  
Step by Step, Hart Foodbank*



Parish of Fleet  
All Saints  
St Philip & St James



## ENERGY MATTERS!

In physics, **energy** (from the Ancient Greek meaning 'activity') is a transferrable property that is recognizable in the performance of work and in the form of heat and light. It can be converted in form, but not created or destroyed. I am no physicist and needed Wikipedia's help with that definition, but I know that hard physical work can make us hot (think about raking the leaves in your garden), and that a hot drink can warm us up on a cold day. But where does the energy we use come from?

The sun provides warmth and energy, which makes plants grow. Plants store that energy and so it passes up the food chain. We also need energy to heat our homes. Cave men burned wood and bones on fires in the mouths of caves. Fortunately, we no longer have to do this and for most people in Britain, electricity and gas heat our homes.

We all know that the burning of fossil fuels is contributing to Global Warming and that we should try to limit our use of them. This is a very tall order considering that gas is the most common heat source in most parts of England and Wales (Census 2021 data), my own home included. Heat pumps seem to be the way to go, but are expensive and can



require extensive work on your house. Perhaps as they become more common the price will drop, but in the meantime what can we do?

Some ideas include... turning off radiators in rooms you are not using; timing your heating to come on only when you need it to or setting your thermostat to 18 or 19 degrees, which is a comfortable temperature for most people. If that is too cold for you, try turning your thermostat down just 1 degree to see if you notice the difference. Combi boilers can be made more efficient by lowering the flow temperature to 60 degrees, and try taking shorter showers as it is usually gas that heats up the water, so by using less water, you use less gas too!

Electricity may be a greener alternative if you are on a green tariff or have solar panels. We are very lucky to have had solar panels installed earlier this year and it is amazing to see how much 'free' electricity we have been able to make, use and sell back to the grid. Some tips for using less electricity would be to make sure your bulbs are energy saving; to turn off appliances that are on standby and to avoid using the tumble dryer.

For many people at this time of rising bills, using energy is a big problem because they cannot afford it. Advice from the money saving expert Martin Lewis is to heat the human not the home, a tip that we could all use. Wearing

furry slippers, multiple layers, woolly jumpers and cuddling a hot water bottle will all help to keep us warm and reduce our bills.

Going back to the definition of energy, it brings to mind God's love for us. It can be converted or spread through our actions of love and compassion for others. It is always there, through the gift of the Holy Spirit, and will never be destroyed. May we use our energies to help others and let them know God's love.

*Grace Bagshaw*



## WHY THE WORLD WAS READY FOR CHRISTMAS

Have you ever wondered why Jesus was born when He was? The Bible tells us that 'when the time had fully come, God sent forth His Son...' (*Galatians 4:4*). The Jewish people had been waiting for their Messiah for centuries. Why did God send Him at precisely that time?

Many biblical scholars believe that the 'time had fully come' for Jesus because of the politics of the time. The Roman Empire's sheer size and dominance had achieved something unique in world history: the opportunity for travel from Bethlehem to Berwick on Tweed without ever crossing into 'enemy territory' or needing a 'passport'. For the first time ever, it was possible for 'common' people to travel wide and far, and quickly spread news and ideas. And all you needed were two languages - Greek to the east of Rome, and Latin to the west and north. You could set sail from Joppa (Tel Aviv) and head for any port on the Mediterranean. And the Roman roads ran straight and true throughout the empire.

So the Roman Empire achieved something it never intended: it helped spread news of Christianity far and wide for 400 years. After that, the Empire crumbled, and the borders shut down. Not until the 19<sup>th</sup> century would people again roam so freely. The time for Jesus to be born, and for news of Him to be able to travel, had indeed 'fully come'.

[www.parishpump.co.uk](http://www.parishpump.co.uk)



*Madonna & Child,  
M Stokes (WikiArt)*



## STAND BY ME

Every year *Stand by Me* provides a progress report for each of the children we sponsor along with some updated photos. The progress reports describe areas where improvement has been seen, both academic and behavioural, areas to work on for next year, an assessment of the student's physical development, any changes in their family circumstances and their extra curricular interest and activities.



### Arsema, Ethiopia, 9



Arsema is a very happy and lovely girl. She has a very good relationship with her teachers and classmates. She likes playing and having fun time with other children. Arsema seems quite a shy girl but she is not afraid to express her ideas and feelings and to seek solutions to her problems. She has good self-esteem. Arsema is a good student in her studies and she participates well in class.

Arsema has done some excellent work this year but it has not been consistent. She is a social butterfly who is often distracted and frequently fails to complete her tasks on time. Her family are helping her at home to improve in this area and this support is appreciated at school. When she is able to concentrate she produces considerably better results. She does, however, frequently seek the attention of her peers, which causes everyone to be distracted. She can be a very helpful and respectful student.

### Laurith, Colombia, 11



Laurith lives with her mother, her little sister, her grandmother and her aunt. She is an active, loving, talkative and cheerful child.

She attends church, enjoys praying and singing praises and listening to Bible stories. She attends the Bible Club that the Care Centre has once a month on Saturdays and she also loves the daily devotionals in the classroom. She is very punctual and she likes to pass out the Bibles to her classmates. She loves to hear about Jesus; she really likes the songs and the ones she likes most are *Jesús está pasando por aquí* ('Jesus is passing by') and *Jesús mi amigo fiel* ('Jesus my faithful friend').

When she grows up she wants to be a doctor; Emmanuel Care Centre celebrated the 'children and professions' day and she dressed up as a doctor. She participates in all the activities done by the Centre and some of them were the Maths Contest, Word Hunters, Bible Week; and in the Sports Week she won prizes and a medal.



## Pau, Myanmar, 7



Pau did good in his school subjects. He needs to keep making effort with his studies. He can read and write English numbers from one to twenty, and he can read and write Myanmar numbers from one to ten and can read and write the English alphabet A to Z. He can also read English simple sentences. He needs to put some more effort in the Myanmar language.

Pau has remained healthy this year. He has grown in height and has gained weight. He spends his free time playing badminton when his father is free, playing football with neighbours on the street in the evenings before taking a bath. He also loves drawing

and colouring in his free time.

Pau is a confident boy. He is friendly and has many friends from school and within the neighbourhood.

As well as the formal reports from *Stand by Me* we have also received more letters from Arsema, Laurith and Pau since our last *In Touch* report. These were in reply to the birthday greetings and money gifts we had sent earlier in the year. They wrote to say thank you and to show us what they had purchased – new shoes for Arsema, clothes, toys and a water bottle for Pau (see *photos*), and shampoo, a doll and a book for Laurith. We plan to send Christmas cards and monetary gifts to them shortly to ensure they arrive in time for the festive season.

Talking about Christmas presents, and as John mentioned in the last Church Meeting, *Stand by Me* have also sent us information about their scheme for purchasing alternative Christmas gifts this year:

### **Gifts that make a world of difference.**

*Our alternative gifts are great ideas to buy your friends and family and each gift that you choose will be given directly to children in our care that most need your gift.*

Simply choose your item and place your order; *Stand by Me* will deliver the gift to the child as well as posting a gift card to you for each item you have chosen, which you can then send to your friend to explain how the gift you have given on their behalf will help to transform the life of a *Stand by Me* child.

Gifts range in price from £5 for a text book or clothing through to £75 for a nurse's or teacher's salary - further details and ordering instructions can be found online at <https://www.standby.me/catalogue>

Thank you for your continuing support and prayers for the work of *Stand by Me* and our sponsored children.

*Helen Bailey, on behalf of 'Footsteps'*

## A PRAYER FOR ADVENT

You spoke, Lord, and light penetrated the darkness.  
A good light. A strong light. A perfect light.  
But we went astray, loving darkness rather than light,  
so you sent your prophets, to call us back towards the light.  
Yet still we were stubborn and afraid,  
so you sent your son, to be the light of the world.  
The light shining in the darkness,  
and the darkness never overcoming it.

You, Lord, are our light and our salvation.  
You are our light and our truth.  
You are our light and our protector.  
You are our light and our fountain of life.  
Your light continues to shine,  
in the dark places of our lives,  
in the dark places of our world,  
and, though things may not be easy, the darkness cannot  
prevail.

Lord, you have called us and brought light into our lives.  
And now you ask us to be your light in the continuing  
darkness.

At times we may be like a small, fragile, flickering candle,  
at times a bright, strong, beam of light...  
Help us this coming week to let your light shine through us  
in our words and our actions,  
in our attitudes and relationships.  
With our hands, our faces,  
our feet and our smiles.  
In the name of Jesus, *Amen*

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*Used with permission*



## THE EVERLASTING TURKEY

On the first day of Christmas my true love said to me,  
"I've bought a big fresh turkey and a proper Christmas tree!"

On the second day of Christmas much laughter could be heard  
As we tucked into our turkey—a most delicious bird.

On the third day of Christmas people came from just next door:  
The turkey tasted just as good as it had done before.

On the fourth day of Christmas came relations young and old.  
We finished up the Christmas pud and had the turkey cold.



On the fifth day of Christmas, outside the  
snowflakes scurried.  
But we were nice and warm inside, and had  
the turkey curried.

On the sixth day of Christmas, the Christmas  
spirit died.  
The children fought and bickered—we had  
turkey rissoles fried.

On the seventh day of Christmas my true love he did wince  
When he sat down at the table—and was offered turkey mince.

On the eighth day of Christmas, the dog had run for shelter,  
For he'd seen our turkey pancakes, and the glass of alka-seltzer.

On the ninth day of Christmas, by lunchtime Dad was blotto:  
He knew that bird was back again, this time as a risotto.

On the tenth day of Christmas we were drinking home-made brew,  
Anything to help us face that steaming turkey stew!

On the eleventh day of Christmas our lovely tree was moulting,  
And with chilli, soy and oyster sauce, the turkey was revolting.

On the twelfth day of Christmas we had smiles back on our lips;  
The guests had gone, the turkey too—

**WE DINED ON FISH AND CHIPS!**

*An important message from LivingStones Christian Centre, Fleet*

## **URGENT—LIVINGSTONES—CAN YOU HELP US STAY OPEN?**



At the LivingStones AGM held in September, the board of directors stated their intention to convene an Extraordinary General Meeting for LivingStones members. During this meeting they are expected to propose a motion that would result in the closure of the retail operations at LivingStones Christian Centre, effective from the end of January. This decision may be reconsidered if an ample amount of voluntary support is

available to continue to keep the Centre open on Fleet Road.

Following the release of that statement, a number of generous individuals have reached out, expressing their willingness to assist and enquiring about the specific support required to keep the Centre operational as a retail facility. In response, the board of directors convened on Friday, November 3rd, and concluded that our specific additional volunteer requirements to sustain our operations are: (a) Two additional Lead Volunteers, (b) an Administration Officer, and (c) at least one more Trustee.

Specifications of these roles are below:

In mid-January, we will host a new volunteer orientation event. During this event, any new potential volunteers will have the opportunity to enquire about our needs and we, in turn, will assess whether we have generated enough support to viably maintain the retail operations of the Centre.

### **1. 2 x Lead Volunteers**

Above all, we are seeking individuals who are passionate about being a beacon of light on the high street for one day each week.

This role encompasses various practical tasks within the Centre, such as opening and closing, managing the cash register, stock management, cleaning, and serving tea, coffee and cakes.

However, equally essential is the Lead Volunteer's commitment to engaging with visitors as they enter the Centre and discerning how to best meet their needs. This may involve helping them find Christian books, cards, art, special event gifts, and, most importantly, being ready to listen and offer prayers when spiritually guided to do so.

Our Centre attracts both churchgoers and those who may not have a church affiliation, and our aim is to exemplify the love of Jesus in any way we can to everyone who comes through our doors.

If you feel this could be you and you feel led to take this further, then please do get in touch with Emma at [emma@mabin.co.uk](mailto:emma@mabin.co.uk) and we will begin a conversation about how you could join our lovely team of Lead Volunteers.

## **2. Administrator**

If you would like to volunteer at Living Stones helping to keep Jesus' Light on the High Street and you have a gifting in Admin then we would love to hear from you.

This role requires proficiency in IT, as you will be responsible for searching the Internet to source items that are often hard to find, including books, gifts, cards, coffee machine supplies, toiletries, and more. You'll be tasked with keeping meticulous records of purchases, ensuring they align with deliveries and invoices before they are submitted to our finance team for payment.

You will also take responsibility for managing the marketing communications of LivingStones, through the website, social media and emails that are used to tell people about what is happening at the Centre.

Typically, those at the Centre will send you a daily email listing items that require ordering, and your role would involve acknowledging these items once they've been ordered. Once a week there will also be messages that need to be shared over the communication channels available to us.

This volunteer position does not necessitate working on-site at the Centre, as you can efficiently manage our procurement needs from the comfort of your home. The time commitment is minimal, likely taking no more than a morning or afternoon per week, at your convenience.

If you feel this may be you then please get in touch with Emma at [emma@mabin.co.uk](mailto:emma@mabin.co.uk) and we can talk more.

## **3. Trustee/Director of the Charity**

LivingStones is currently served by five Trustees, but one of those Trustees is likely to step down after Christmas. We are looking for one, or ideally more additional, Trustees who will share a passion and vision for extending God's Kingdom through the opportunities presented by having a Centre on the High Street in Fleet. You will need to have practical skills that you consider will be useful to LivingStones, as well as a willingness to serve in the Centre to cover on the occasional days when other volunteers are not available.

If you feel this may be you then please get in touch with Mark at [mabinm@me.com](mailto:mabinm@me.com) to find out more about joining the Trustees.

*The Trustees of LivingStones Christian Centre*



**Mouse Makes**



**GOD'S PROMISE**

*Isaiah 9:6-7*

CHILD • BORN • SON  
GIVEN • WONDERFUL  
COUNCELLOR  
MIGHTY • GOD  
EVERLASTING  
FATHER • PRINCE  
PEACE • LORD



**AN ANGEL MESSENGER**

*Luke 1:26-38*

ANGEL • GABRIEL  
JOSEPH • MARY  
FAVOUR • SON  
JESUS • GREAT  
THRONE • REIGN  
FOREVER • HOLY  
SERVANT • WORD

**ADVENT**  
comes from  
the Latin  
'AD VENTO'  
which means  
**ARRIVAL**

In Advent we  
celebrate Jesus' birth  
and look forward to  
the time when Jesus  
will come again.



**A LONG JOURNEY**

*Luke 2:1-20*

BETHLEHEM  
REGISTER • BIRTH  
MANGER • INN  
SHEPHERDS • FLOCK  
ANGELS • JOY  
GOOD NEWS • PRAISE  
SAVIOUR • CHRIST



**THE BEST GIFT OF ALL**

*John 3:16*

GOD • SO • LOVED  
WORLD • HE • GAVE  
ONLY • SON  
WHOEVER • BELIEVES  
ETERNAL • LIFE



Colour in one star each day until Christmas

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