

GRAPEVINE

DECEMBER 2023/ JANUARY 2024 Number 573

The monthly magazine of
Belmont Road Baptist Church, Carey Baptist Church and
The Church of the Resurrection, Grovehill
(Anglican/Free Church)

FAREWELL TO GRAPEVINE

From Tim Keightley, Belmont Rd

Recently, I said to someone that I would contact them by email. They looked at me in bewilderment. "Who uses email any more, it's so slow!?" Their preferred method of communication was perhaps WhatsApp or Snapchat but even then, their attitude seemed to suggest, "don't write something too long because I won't read it all." A communications revolution in my life time! (At this point modern communication requires that I write LOL.)

I suspect that the printing and circulation of Grapevine, did not feel especially revolutionary even when it was one of the main forms of communication between the three churches. If that is the case it may be because we take for granted the freedom we have to communicate, and the wealth of knowledge we have at our finger tips.

The first printers of the Scriptures, and of much other early printed literature, were often persecuted for their activities. Many, like Wycliffe and Tyndale, were driven by the belief that the scriptures should be accessible to all, not just the learned. They also believed that translation and interpretation should not be in the hands of powerful and corrupt church leaders. They were among those who used this ability to advocate for much more freedom of belief and expression. Many paid with their lives.

In this light, Grapevine was indeed a part of the communication revolution. More voices than just those of (in my earlier time) Bob Smart, Tim Keightley or Ruth Matthews were to be heard! Thank goodness for that! (I feel it important to say that we weren't corrupt!)

In recent years, much of society has passed from the electronic, to the electric age of communication. As part of this, it feels as though use of communication channels has become fragmented, less collective, more individualistic, in the face of so much choice of what to see, hear and take in. For many, life has moved online. There are online churches and virtual worlds. The communication revolution continues, and churches are working hard at finding ways of communication essential unchanging truths in this always changing world.

We give thanks for Grapevine and for all those who produced and circulated it. For how it pulled us together and kept us collectively informed. It was revolutionary in its time.

From Austin Janes, Grovehill

Do you remember losing your first teeth? (I don't mean the ones you put in the glass by the bed!!!!)

I remember my first one which I thought would be there forever, but then seemed to wobble for ages, attached by the smallest part of skin! I remember losing it while eating my Nan's Christmas pudding and custard! I don't remember being bothered by the gap, because I had heard that a new tooth would grow in its place.

When Grovehill Church was opened in 1977 we had the full range of ministers, Anglican, Baptist, URC and Roman Catholic. It was easy to feel part of each other and something exciting. There were distinct identities and connections. People wanted a church that represented the churches they had moved from.

Today people join Grovehill Church of the Resurrection, not because of a Denomination, but because they feel a belonging. But it is important they aren't just 'Grovehillians', but Christians. They need to know there is a bigger church out there.

I have been grateful for the Grapevine Magazine, because it has been the piece of skin keeping the 'tooth' of Grovehill Ecumenical Partnership connected to the Baptist Churches. But things change, and I hope that like my baby teeth were replaced by adult gnashers, we will find the necessity for stronger connections between all three of our churches. Maybe more social gatherings with our Ecumenical partners are needed... So if you see your ministers in a café, we are just growing adult teeth!

From Colin Cartwright, Carey

So, it falls to me to finish these ministerial ramblings, in what is, sadly, our final issue of 'Grapevine'. But more seriously, thanks Austin and Tim for your contributions to the magazine again! My own illustration, mentioned in a recent talk on John 15, is the amazing vine our daughter has in her Essex garden. This abundantly fruitful plant, providing shelter and shade and tiny, dark grapes with the sweetest taste, is a wonderful picture, both of our relationship with Jesus, as well as a picture of the church universal.

Our three churches owe a great debt to the team of people who over the years produced, photocopied, sorted, folded and distributed the Grapevine magazine for us. Most recently: Hilary, Paula, Susan, Clifford, Keith, Joan, Marion and many others, too numerous to mention here. You know who you are.

This magazine has been an invaluable link between our three congregations, particularly during our Covid lockdowns. And, in the future, copies of these magazines will provide an important resource in researching the stories of our churches. As you know, Grapevine has been replaced by its pale shadow, the monthly 'News from the Fellowships' sheet.

What of future communication? As Austin says, we need to find new ways, as one vine, to strengthen what connects us. There may be many new ways of communicating these days, via social media. Dare I mention AI? However, nothing can replace humans and all creation, meeting 'in the flesh'. After all, this Christmas we celebrate our God, the Supreme Communicator. 'The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among

us'. Thanks be to God for the fulfilment of all his promises in Jesus - to our three churches, and to all humanity and all of creation.



NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

BELMONT ROAD

Preaching Plan for December and January

These are our events over the next two months please feel free to look on our web site if you need more information. Our regular activities are still continuing and these can all be found on our web site

Sunday 3rd December - Advent 1 service led by Kathy Williamson

Sunday 10th December - Nativity led by Sunday Club

Sunday 17th December - Christingle during morning service

6:30pm Carols by Candlelight led by Tim Keightley

Thursday 21st December – 8.00pm Communion by Candlelight

Sunday 24th December - Worship led by Tim Keightley

Monday 25th December - Christmas Day led by Tim Keightley

Sunday 31st December New Year's Eve

Film night

Saturday 20th January 2024 - more details to follow nearer the time

CAREY

Sunday worship

Services continue to be in the sanctuary and on Zoom.

Refreshments are served in the hall after the service and offers of help with the rota to prepare these would still be welcome (contact Judy on 01442 216387)

Monthly prayer sheet for Children, Youth and Families work

Tamzin is producing a monthly prayer sheet for Carey's CYF work. It is available from her or on the memorial table in the church.

Baby and Toddler Group

The Baby and Toddler Group continues on **Fridays from 10.00-11.30am** during term-time Please speak to Tamzin or Colin if you would like more information about the group or if you would be interested in helping.

Please see the Facebook page for more details about the group https://m.facebook.com/careybabytoddlergroup

Prayer meetings

The **Wednesday** evening Prayer Meeting at **8.00pm** is now in the church. The Thursday evening meeting continues at **7.30pm at Joan's house**.

Communion Offerings

Our Communion Offering on **Sunday 3rd December** will be for Christian Aid's Christmas appeal, which is for young women in Bangladesh. The offering at the **Carol Service on 17th** will also be for this appeal. It will still be possible to give to Spurgeon's Childcare if you would prefer. The Communion offering in January will be for CAP (Christians against Poverty). (see *Diary for further details of Christmas services*)

Zoom coffee morning

There will probably be a Christmas Coffee Morning on Zoom on **Wednesday 6th December at 11.00am** with Tamzin hosting. (Please let her or Hilary know if you would like an invitation.)

Carey Hymn Café

Unfortunately the Advent Hymn Café had to be cancelled. The next one will be in March.

Ladies' Group

The Ladies' Group will be meeting for a Christmas Bring-and-Share Lunch on **Tuesday 12th December** in the Memorial Hall. Please speak to Ann if you expect to be there.

The Book Club

The Book Club will have a Christmas Social on 13th December at The Winkwell.

January Church Meeting

We will be holding our January Church Meeting at **7.30pm on Wednesday 17**th at the church and on Zoom. Non-members are welcome to attend and join in the discussion about the work of the church, without voting.

BMS Mission Partners

Please continue to pray for Peter and Louise, our Mission Partners in Bangladesh. We now know that one of them will be visiting Carey on Sunday 25th June. Contact Hilary if you would like to receive their prayer letters every two months or so. There will be a Christmas card to sign for two Sundays at the church.

GROVEHILL

For all Zoom details, please contact Revd. Austin Janes at: revaustin@sky.com

Sundays 11am - Communion Service and Junior Church in Church and on Facebook 'Grovehill Church of the Resurrection - The Church behind the Chippy' page. (Note: These services are no longer available on YouTube.)

1st Sunday of the month 3.30pm Causeway Church (see below)

2nd and 4th Sundays of the month 6.00-7.00pm Hard COR Youth Group (10 to 14 year olds) in church

3rd Sunday of the month 6.00-7.00pm Digging Deeper Bible Youth Group in church (10-14 year-olds)

Monday-Friday 9.00am – Morning Prayer on Zoom

Monday-Friday 9.30pm - Night Prayer on Zoom (For zoom details please contact Revd. Austin Janes at: revaustin@sky.com)

1st & 3rd **Tuesdays** of the month Men's Bible Study & Faith Group on Zoom at 7:30pm

1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month Ladies Bible Study on Zoom at 12 noon

Thursdays 1.00pm - Sticky Fingers - Craft, chat, drinks, toys and Toddler Church in the Church Hall (term-time)

2nd **and 4**th **Fridays** – 2.00pm 'Just a thought' Bible Study Group in Church Hall (contact revaustin@sky.com for more info)

Saturday mornings – 'Drinks and Dunkables' - 10.00am to 12noon Refreshments in the Church Hall.

Causeway Church

Sundays 7th **January at 3.30pm** - Causeway Church in Church. If you know of any young people (16+) or adults with additional needs who might be interested, please let them and their helpers know about this – they will be very welcome.

Messy Church and Lights Switch On

Sunday 10th December at 3.00pm and 4:30pm Messy Christingle & Christmas Light Switch On in Henry Wells Square.

CHURCHES TOGETHER NEWS

Prayer Calendar for March

Sunday 3rd Seventh Day Adventist Church their leaders and congregation.

Congregation.

Sunday 10th Society of Friends (Quakers) – Old Town area their leaders and congregation.

Sunday 17th Pray for God's blessing on His world as we prepare for

Christmas and New Year

Sunday 24th All Churches celebrating the birth of Jesus.

Community Carol Singing

Saturday 16^{th} December -1.00 - 2.00pm at the Rainbow Stage. Let's Join with shepherds and angels and sing!



BELMONT AND CAREY YOUTH CAMP 2024

Belmont and Carey Youth Camp next year will be on the Isle of Wight Costs: for children aged 8 to 18 – cost £155 instead of £180 if we receive your application form and deposit of £50 by 1st January 2024. For children aged 14 to 18 - cost £175 due to them having an extra paid activity day.

For booking information please visit our website or talk your youth club leaders at Belmont or Carey Baptist Church. website www.bcyccamp.com Warren Pyke

DENS NEWS

Foodbank

We have a good supply of many food, hygiene and household items, however there are some specific items that we are in need of. Please see our High Needs List below.

High Needs List

Food: Tinned ham/corned beef, Tinned fruit, Long life milk, Long life juice/squash, Tinned potatoes, Tinned vegetables, Tinned sweetcorn, Tinned fish, Christmas biscuits, Christmas selection packs, Custard, Nuts, Gravy (small), Stuffing

Kitchen and Hygiene items

Roasting trays (large)

Deodorants, Nappies (sizes 6-8), Laundry liquid/tabs/powder (small packs)

Please note that:

- We do not accept furniture
- We currently are not taking any clothes, shoes and accessories

Thank you for your support

Donations can be dropped off at our Foodbank at Dacre House (see above) – Monday-Friday 10am-1pm.

Tel: 01442 250969

Email: office@dacorumfoodbank.org.uk
Web: www.dens.org.uk Charity No: 1097185

If you are bringing items to one of the churches, you will need to bring them by Sunday 10th December.

ADVENT REFLECTIONS FROM EMBRACE THE MIDDLE EAST

The theme for our Advent Reflections emails this year is The Light Bearers. Using readings set for the Advent season, we will focus on how we can reflect the love, peace and light of God in the midst of violence and darkness.

As you prepare for Christmas, it is our prayer that we may all find a way to build a more Christ-childlike world.

ADVENT VIGILS

Our Advent Reflections this year will also include the opportunity to pray with us and our Middle East sisters and brothers through three online Advent Vigils. These will be held via Zoom at 7pm on Monday 4th, 11th and 18th of December. The Zoom link to each vigil will be included in your Advent Reflection email.

SIGN UP TO ADVENT REFLECTIONS

To sign up visit the website: www.embrace.org



GRAPEVINE

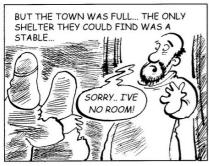
As most of you know, this is the last issue of 'Grapevine'. A period of Team Ministry started in the town in 1973, involving the Belmont Rd, Boxmoor, Carey and Grovehill and Marlowes churches. The first issue of what we know as 'Grapevine' was produced in May 1974 and it has evolved over the years. Many people have been involved with its' production in various roles and we are grateful to them all. Editors have been: Hugh Cross, Roger Higginson, Marjorie Johns, Gloria Knight and myself. Since the Team Ministry came to an end in 2002 'Grapevine' has continued to provide a link between the churches and remind us tthat we are part of a wider family of Baptists and, Through the Anglican/Free Church Congregation at Grovehill, also a part of the wider Church.



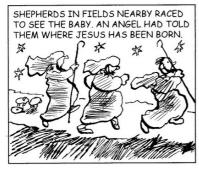




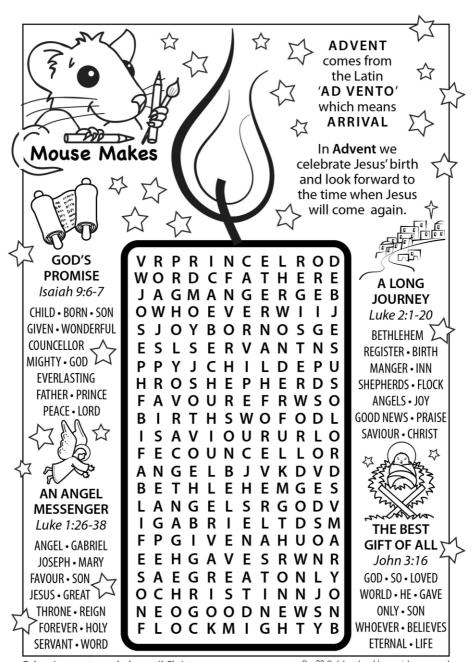












Colour in one star each day until Christmas

Dec23 © deborah noble • parishpump.co.uk

WHY IS KING CHARLES ON A MISSION TO TACKLE FOOD POVERTY

King Charles is on a mission to tackle food poverty and rising food waste.

It is said that he and the Queen eat daily slices from the same cake until it is finished, as part of a drive to curb their personal food waste.

As for the nation, the king has been increasingly concerned that in the UK, 12 million tons of food is thrown away each year - even though almost three quarters of it could still be eaten, according to experts. In contrast, an estimated 4.7million people are living in food poverty.

To combat this problem, King Charles has launched The Coronation Food Project, to coincide with this, his 75th year.

Up to eight new food hubs around the country will store food, prepare it, and package it, before redistributing it to organisations like food banks and community kitchens. The long-term goal is to circulate 200 million meals a year.

In the meantime, King Charles is careful not to throw his cake away. Is there one simple thing you could do in your own kitchen this Christmas, to curb your personal food waste?

(Parish Pump)



CHRISTIAN AID CHRISTMAS APPEAL

As we prepare for Christmas, girls as young as 13 are leaving school and preparing to get married. They have skills and dreams – but, born into poverty, too many girls are growing up without human rights to control their lives. They're disadvantaged from the moment they're born, because of their gender.

By donating, your gift could help transform the lives of young women in remote, vulnerable regions like Bangladesh's Kurigram district. With training in business skills, they'll become change agents. They'll use the power of the internet to support each other and their families, and have businesses, giving them a brighter future to lift themselves and their communities out of poverty.

Will you help provide that chance for young women today?

Kakoli Khatun is 21 and lived in Kurigram, one of Bangladesh's poorest and most disaster-prone regions, where 70% of families live in extreme poverty. Kakoli is studying for a degree at college. At the same time, she's running a successful business from home, making beautiful quilts, and selling them online. She supports her parents and creates sustainable employment for nine other young women. Kakoli launched her business with training, start-up funding and support from Christian Aid and our partner, Aid Comilla – made possible by supporters like you.

As we celebrate Christmas, let's make 2024 the year they can live with dignity, safety, security, and equality. Your gift could help young women be a powerful force for change.



CHRISTIAN AID CHRISTMAS APPEAL

January is named after the Roman god Janus. He had two faces, so he could study the past and see into the future.

At the start of a new year, we dispose of old calendars and diaries. No doubt, it is only natural to look back at the former year. Perhaps we recall occasions of happy times that include special moments with dear friends. On the other hand, our old year may have had disappointments, such as loss of employment or deterioration of health.

We might also reminisce at the life of our church. We remember our building regularly filled for our services. There were many joyous occasions in which we were encouraged and supported. However, over time, things have changed. We may now have a dwindling congregation, with its regular members elderly and less active.

However, these pondering are not meant to make us depressed! We can look back with thankfulness that God has been with us. Also, we can look to the future, praying that God will give us wisdom, strength and guidance for our journey ahead.

The Bible is full of instances where individuals and indeed the Jewish nation looked back. They had annual Feast Days, through which God showed them His grace and favour. These festivals were important because they had a dual purpose – to look back and face forward. The Passover looked back to the Israelites deliverance from slavery in Egypt. This meal was a reminder that just as God had cared for them in the past, He would be with them in the future.

Similarly, for us, the Communion Service is a reminder of the sacrifice of Jesus who secured our salvation. We look back to His life, death, and resurrection so that we can live with confidence that our sins are forgiven, and one day we will live in God's eternal Home.

January can be a month when remember God's blessings and faithfulness in the past, enabling us to look to the future with confidence. As we start a new year, may it be our prayer that God will enrich us wherever we are, and that we will know He is always with us.

Lester Amann (Parish Pump)

ECOCHURCH

12 Days Wild is our festive nature challenge, encouraging you to do one wild thing a day from the 25th December to the 5th January each year. In those quiet days between Christmas and New Year, winter wildlife is just waiting to be explored! Your wild acts could be little things to help nature - like recycling your Christmas tree or feeding the birds – or ways to connect to the natural world, like taking in the calm of stargazing.

Avoid throwaway plastic, go homemade, and keep wildlife in mind. It'll add a sweet personal touch that'll mean the world to someone this Christmas!

Wildlife Trusts' '12 Days Wild' mini Christmas challenge encourages everyone to do one wild thing each day between 25 December and 5 January. Sign up on our website: www.ecochurch@arocha.or to receive lots of inspiration that will help you stay wild over the Christmas period.

NEWS FROM EMBRACE THE MIDDLE EAST

LATEST UPDATES 7 DECEMBER

Significant damage to two medical clinics in Gaza

We have received the following update from our partner the DSPR:

"Unfortunately, our medical centre in the AI-Daraj area has been levelled to the ground. The primary health care clinics, the pharmacy, the physiotherapy, the optical and the dental clinics and the psychosocial unit, do not exist anymore. Nobody from our staff was there but unfortunately tens of neighbours who used to be our clients were killed and injured in that bombardment.

Nevertheless, our staff are proceeding in response to the huge needs and to reduce the pain and suffering of the people in Gaza; we are proud of them, we believe that they are real heroes, they are standing for care and support, working days and nights while trying to take care of their family members and themselves."

Now they are mainly working with displaced families in the south of the Gaza Strip:

- Running psychological interventions for children and mothers, as well as fun activities for children, to help alleviate the psychological pressure they have as a result of their traumatic experiences
- Distributing hygiene kits and organising health awareness sessions
- Providing primary health care services, including distributing some medicines at their DSPR-NECC Rafah Clinic

Israel and Palestine: Prayers for peace

Sometimes it is difficult to know how to pray in times of crisis, so we have put together a prayer to help guide your intercessions. As a fragile, temporary truce begins, please join us in praying for a continued deescalation of the violence, for a full ceasefire and for a just peace to prevail.

We give thanks for the release of hostages and continue to pray for those still in captivity. We pray for the unconditional release of all hostages held by Hamas.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We continue to pray for a safe and prosperous tomorrow for Palestinians and Israelis, a future of equal rights for all and an end to the occupation. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We lift Embrace's partners and their staff before you, loving heavenly Father. We ask that they remain safe and know your peace and protection. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

LOOKING AHEAD

January is named after the Roman god Janus. He had two faces, so he could study the past and see into the future.

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We wish all our readers a Happy Christmas and a blessed new year

DECEMBER DIARY

BELMONT ROAD

(Services on Zoom and in church – see page 2 - All services led by Tim Keightley unless otherwise stated)

Sunday 10 th	10.30am	Nativity led by Sunday Club		
Sunday 17 th	10.30am 6.30pm	Christingle during morning service Carols by Candlelight		
Thursday 21 st	8.00pm	Communion by Candlelight		
Sunday 24 th	10.30am	Morning Worship		
Monday 25 th	10.30am	Christmas Day Service		
Sunday 31 st	10.30am	New Year's Eve Service		

CAREY

(Services in church and on Zoom and edited audio recording on website – all led by Colin Cartwright unless otherwise stated)

Sunday 10 th	10.30am	Christingle Mingle in Hall	
Tuesday 12th	12noon for	Ladies Group Christmas Lunch	
	12.30pm		
Sunday 17th	10.30am	Carol Service	
Sunday 24th	10.30am	Morning Service	
Monday 25 th	10.30am	Christmas Day short service on	
•		Zoom	
Sunday 31st	10.30am	New Year Service, 'Hymn Café'	

GROVEHILL

(Services in church and on Facebook see page 6)

Sundays 11.00am Communion Service in church and on Facebook

Saturdays	10.00am- 12noon	'Drinks and Dunkables' in Church Hall
Fridays 9 th	2.00pm	'Just a Thought' Bible Study Group
Saturday 10 th	10.00am-	Open Morning (page 7)
	2.00pm	
Sunday 17 th	6.00pm	Midnight Mass
Monday 25 th	3.00pm	Children's Morning All-age
•	11.30pm	Communion

OTHER EVENTS

Saturday 16th 1.00- Churches Together Carol Singing,

2.00pm Rainbow Stage, Marlowes

JANUARY DIARY

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Saturday 20th Film Night (Time to be confirmed)

CAREY

Sunday 7th 10.30 am Morning Service Sunday 14th 10.30am All-age Service Tuesday 9th 8.00pm Deacons' Meeting

Sunday 21st 10.30am Morning Service with Communion

Wednesday 7.30pm Church Meeting

17th

GROVEHILL

Sunday 8th 3.30pm Causeway Church

OTHER EVENTS

Wednesday Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

 $18^{th}-25^{th}$

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD BAPTIST CHURCHES SUNDAY SERVICES

(see pages 2-6 & 18-19 for current variations to this pattern)

BELMONT ROAD

(Bennetts End)

www.belmontroadbaptist.co.uk

Morning Worship - 10.30am

Sunday Club (5 - 15 years)
Occasional All Age Family Worship on 2nd Sunday in month 4th Sunday in month includes Communion

CAREY (Marlowes)

www.careybaptisthemel.org.uk

Morning Worship - 10.30am – Children's Church and Youth Church 2nd Sunday in month All Age Family Worship

3rd Sunday in month includes Communion

GROVEHILL ANGLICAN/FREE CHURCH

(Church of the Resurrection, Henry Wells Square)

www.grovehillchurch.org.uk

Morning Worship - 11.00am - with Junior Church 2nd Sunday in month: All Age Worship

MINISTERS

BELMONT ROAD Rev Tim Keightley 07821 741435 CAREY Rev Colin Cartwright 256433 GROVEHILL Rev Austin Janes 270585