

Young people of the persecuted church celebrate Christmas

Christmas is a time of joy – and it's a joy still very much felt by young believers who celebrate it in the shadow of pressure and persecution for their faith. These short stories are a powerful testament to this, and please remember our persecuted family in your prayers over the festive season.

"I am impatiently waiting for Christmas" – Anti in Cameroon



For many years, Anti's celebration of Christmas has been clouded by the threat of attack, but now in a safer area, she is able to celebrate more freely. Since October, Anti has been rehearsing Christmas songs – and she can't wait to perform them!

"Celebrate the joy of His birth" – young people in Brunei

Did you know that, in Brunei, public Christmas celebrations are banned? It means that Christians can only celebrate the festive season where Muslims cannot see them – and it's why, in this picture, the identities of the young people featured are hidden.



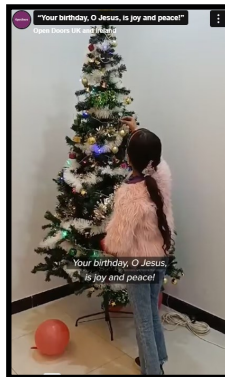
"We have come to worship Him" – children in Central African Republic



Because of violence and conflict, millions of Christians in sub-Saharan Africa will celebrate Christmas away from their homes. That includes these children from Central African Republic (CAR), who have been displaced and are being cared for by a local church. They are so grateful for this support and are excited for Christmas – looking forward to gifts and good food, without the danger of attack.

"Your birthday, O Jesus, is joy and peace!" – little girl in Egypt

In Egypt, Christians are so often deprived of justice, fairness and protection because of their faith. In fact, at times they must hide their faith to be treated in the same way as other Egyptians. Despite the pressures experienced by many believers, Christmas remains a precious and joyous occasion, particularly for children, and that's why this young girl is singing as she decorates a Christmas tree. For security reasons, her face is hidden – a reminder of the secrecy that must accompany the Christmas celebrations of so many of our persecuted family worldwide.



Ringstone in Aveland News Sheet



22 December 2024
Fourth Sunday of Advent

Collect for this Sunday

God our redeemer, who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of your Son: grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour, so we may be ready to greet him when he comes again as our judge; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Readings for this Sunday

Micah 5.2-5a; Hebrews 10.5-10; Luke 3.7-18



Magnificat

'My soul magnifies the Lord,

and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,

for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm;

he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly;

he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,

according to the promise he made to our ancestors,

to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and for evermore, Amen

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and for evermore, Amen

Post Communion Prayer for this Sunday

Heavenly Father, who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of the promised saviour: fill us your servants with your grace, that in all things we may embrace your holy will and with her rejoice in your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Please pray for...

Eben Atkinson, Sheila Bates, Margaret Brumby, Marie Rose Cubacub, Christine Evans, Sue Grainge, Annie Hall, Clive Hall, Robert Hitchens, Jane Knight, Imogen Matthews, Pat Reid, John Rowntree, Maggie Sharman, Ivan Spencer, Amanda Thomson, Clive Walker, Kevin Whitfield, King Charles III, and for any others whom we name in the silence of our hearts.

We give thanks for those on the road to recovery.

We remember Judy Long, Ann Woodward, Carol Godfrey, Jo Honniball and the souls of all the faithful departed. May they rest in peace and rise in glory; and we pray for those who mourn their loss.

Funeral anniversaries: Walter Baxter (6 months); Maurice Brooker (1 year); Roy Machin (2 years); Barbara Jeffreys (13 years)

From the Book of the Prophet Micah:

“He shall stand firm and shepherd his flock... for now his greatness shall reach to the ends of the earth; he shall be peace.”

Reflection:

Through the prophet Micah God’s promise has come true in Jesus, “He shall be peace.” Our faith in Jesus is expressed by our determination to act as “ambassadors” of the peace the Promised One has brought.

So, we ask ourselves:

- ✠ How can I be an “ambassador of peace” in Jesus’ name?
- ✠ Where and to whom do I need to speak words of forgiveness; be an agent of reconciliation between hostile parties; speak calmly while others are shouting; act justly when the voiceless are being taken advantage of?



.Can you help?

Here is a **new** list of items that are running low, but feel free to donate any in-date, non-perishable food at any of our **Donation Points**

Milk (UHT cartons)	Fruit juice / squash	Coffee
Tinned meat	Jam	Deserts
Custard	Snacks—pot nodles, rice etc	
Laundry powder / liquid	Washing up liquid	Toothbrushes
Toilet roll	Razors and shaving foam	

There is a collection box in St John the Baptist Church, on the left at the back of the church. Please be as generous as possible.

Sunday and regular weekday Services in the Group

22 December	11am	Eucharist	Kirkby Underwood
	3pm	Evening Prayer	Morton
29 December	11am	Eucharist	Morton
5 January	9am	Eucharist	Morton
	3pm	Evening Prayer	Haconby
12 January	9am	Eucharist	Haconby
	3pm	Evening Prayer	Morton
19 January	11am	Eucharist	Morton
Wednesday	10 am	See below	Morton

From 1 January, the Wednesday service will be Morning Prayer.

Do you know anyone who is unable to get to church but who would like to receive Holy Communion? Contact Revd Neil on 01778 219626

Safeguarding & Contact Information

Safeguarding: We take your welfare and safety very seriously!

Revd Neil (Rector): revdneil@yahoo.com, 01778 219626 or

Janice Hill (Group Safeguarding Officer): janicethreetun s@hotmail.co.uk,
01778 440733 and 07972 211936

Group Administrator and for entries to news sheet (by Tuesday please)

Sue O’Riordan: ringstoneoffice@gmail.com

Christmas services in the Ringstone in Aveland Group



Carols by Candlelight

Tuesday 24 December at 5pm

Morton

Tuesday 24 December at 7pm

Dunsby



Eucharist Services:

Tuesday 24 December at 11.30pm

Morton

Wednesday 25 December at 10am

Kirkby Underwood

Neil’s last service in the Group:

Sunday 29 December at 11am

Morton

