

When Herod had died, an angel directed Joseph to take Mary and the little boy Jesus to Galilee where they lived in Nazareth. The Hebrew form of 'Nazareth' can mean 'branch' or 'shoot'. See Isaiah 11:1 ~ *A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.* Out of Nazareth would come this Branch. Amazing when you think of the popular opinion of Nazareth: *Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?* (John 1:46)

God was not going to abandon mankind, you and me, his creation. **He gave his one and only Son.** He **gave** .... This is the 'indescribable gift' (2 Corinthians 9:15). A gift is not something you pay for. It is given freely. God gave his gift in person, not anonymously, his most precious gift of love to each one of us individually whatever our state, status or standing in society.

Why did God give us this gift? We certainly didn't deserve it. Like the people of Israel we have turned our backs on God time and time again and suffered as a consequence. Through his commandments, through his prophets, through dreams and revelations, through a 70-year exile, he sought to win his people back but he knew they couldn't do it themselves and so gave his Son.

If we receive this gift from God, that is, Jesus, we'll receive far more than any material gift we receive at Christmas.

What do we receive? How do we receive this gift? Is anything required of us? Come next week.

.....  
\*In America, families may display a star in a window of their homes to show they have lost a son or loved one on active service for their country. One Christmas Eve a little boy was walking through town with his father and saw a star in a window and asked what it meant. His father explained and they walked on, seeing a star in this or that window, sometimes two stars. Then the boy looked up and saw a single star shining brightly in the sky. "Whose star is that?" he asked. His father explained, "That's God's star, to show that his Son, Jesus, also died on active service ~ for the whole world."

.....  
For the love story: see 'Soul Cravings' by Erwin McManus, Entry 11.

### ***Breaking News(!)***

E-mail just received from the Swanage Christian Centre (the Old Stable):  
Swanage Christian Centre invites all its supporters, friends and regular customers to join the staff for a cup of tea and cake on Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> December. Drop in 2-4pm. Thank you to everyone who has encouraged the staff and work at the Centre during the year.



## *The King's Church Swanage*



Bulletin  
December 6<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup> 2009

*For God so loved the world that he gave  
his one and only Son,  
that whoever believes in him  
shall not perish but have eternal life.*

*John 3:16*

Sunday, December 6<sup>th</sup> 4pm  
Informal gathering  
at the Salvation Army  
with Breaking of Bread

Please let Ann have any entries for the bulletin by Thursday morning prior to the relevant Sunday  
Contact by phone: 01929 422428 or email: [ann.whitefield.davis@talktalk.net](mailto:ann.whitefield.davis@talktalk.net)  
Email: [ann@kingschurch-swanage.co.uk](mailto:ann@kingschurch-swanage.co.uk) [www.kingschurch-swanage.co.uk](http://www.kingschurch-swanage.co.uk)  
Registered Charity No. 1077883

### *For your diary:*

- **Monday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 7.30pm:** Monday Night Praise and Worship at the Salvation Army.
- **Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, 4:00pm:** Christmas Carols at the Salvation Army, followed by a Christmas buffet at the Red Lion. Cost of food to be covered by the church but you will need to buy your own drinks. Please let Mike or Ann know if you are coming as we need to let the Red Lion have numbers by 6<sup>th</sup> December.
- **Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> December, 6.30-8.30pm:** Christmas Party for children aged 7-14. This is being organised by Tom Bullock, Children and Families Worker, at the Methodist Church. The invitation is to all children of this age, plus parents. Just let Tom know on 01929 421767 or e-mail: [www.swanagemethodist.org.uk](http://www.swanagemethodist.org.uk) if you have children would like to go. There is a small charge of £1 each.
- **Saturday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, 7-10pm:** We've been invited to join King's Church, Poole for their Christmas Party. There will be a very good Chinese meal (cost £8, children £4), also music and fun. Let Mike and Ann know if you wish to go.
- **Sunday, December 20<sup>th</sup>, 10.30am:** We are joining King's Church, Poole for morning worship. Let Mike or Ann know if you need transport. There will be **no** meeting at the Salvation Army that afternoon. Instead, come to the Town Carol Service at St. Mary's at 6.30pm. It is always a lovely occasion.
- **Friday, December 25<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, 27<sup>th</sup>:** King's Church will not be meeting either day but why not go along to one of the other Christmas Day services?

---

### *G.L.E.E.*

Derek has given me dates of forthcoming visits to Abbeyfield & Cliff Top:  
Sun. 6<sup>th</sup> Dec. 7pm: Cliff Top: Carol Service with the Salvation Army Band  
**Sat.12<sup>th</sup>** Dec.(note change of day) 6pm: Abbeyfield: Carol Service with the Salvation Army Band. Do remember Derek and Stuart in your prayers and join them if you can on these visits which are so much appreciated by the residents of the homes.

---

### *New Year*

#### *Church Meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> January*

We'll be having a church meeting after our Sunday afternoon service. We'll have tea (as we used to) combined with Breaking of Bread. Then there'll be time to update everyone. Please let Ann or Mike know if you need a lift home after the meeting. We would like all members to attend.

### *Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup> November*

*"Do not be discouraged as you look around and see only a few people," the Lord says. He sees a multitude he's gathering to himself. We are to look to Jesus and not be discouraged.* These prophetic words came to encourage us to continue and not give up. We can't see the multitude but God can. A couple of times recently we've heard that God is doing things behind the scenes, bringing elements and factors into place.

Mike and Ann had spent a week in Israel and Ann outlined what were for her a couple of special moments (in the midst of a very full and wonderful week). Firstly, it was a privilege to visit Israel, the Holy Land, the Promised Land and, as the Minister of Tourism reminded us, a privilege that was denied to Moses, the great leader who led the Israelites out of captivity in Egypt and spent the next 40 years in the desert. Moses was only allowed to look over into the land from Mount Nebo, now in Jordan, but visible from Jericho ~ so near and yet so far. Secondly, I had no idea that I, as a Gentile lady with no head covering, would be allowed to approach the Western (Wailing) Wall ~ and moreover, place a prayer in one of the crevices of that ancient wall. There is, of course, no need to travel thousands of miles to pray, but there was a special poignancy in placing a prayer for the peace of Jerusalem (see Psalm 122) while there.

.....  
It was the first Sunday in Advent and people readily responded when Ann started with the first three words of John 3:16 ~ **For God so** .....(quoted in full on the front page). If you've never learnt a Bible verse before, this is a good one to start with. Why? Because 'in a nutshell' it contains the whole message of the Bible, God's Word. God **so** loved the world ~ so much that as a result he gave his Son, Jesus. This was love in action; God could not bear to see us lost to himself through sin.

When did this plan of action first start? It's an amazing thing that the whole story of Jesus' life is foretold in considerable detail in the Old Testament. Just looking at some details of Jesus' early life:

1. He was to be a descendant of King David: O.T. Isaiah 9: 6-7; N.T. John 7:42.
2. He would be born in Bethlehem: O.T. Micah 5:2; N.T. Matthew 2:6. David, too, was born in Bethlehem, hence our much-loved carol: 'Once in royal David's city .....' 1Samuel 16
3. He would be born of a virgin: O.T. Isaiah 7:14; N.T. Matthew 1:23
4. A star would rise: O.T. Numbers 24:17; N.T. Matthew 2:1-2.\*
5. Tributes would be brought like those of the wise men: O.T. Psalm 72:10; N.T. Matthew 2:11
6. As a little boy, Jesus would be taken to Egypt by his parents to flee the threat of death at Herod's hands. Matthew 2:13-15 ~ *out of Egypt I called my son* ~ a direct reference to Hosea 11:1