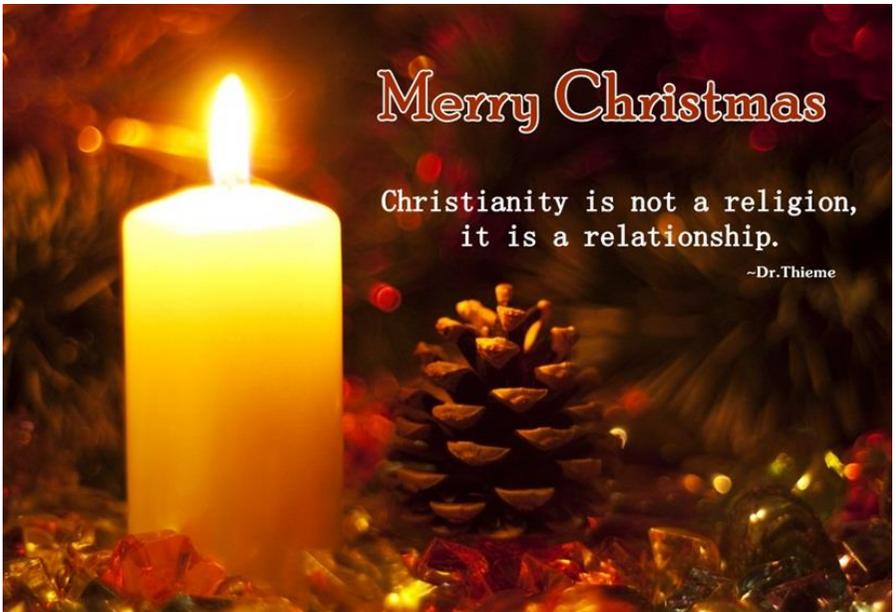




The
United
Reformed
Church

The COURIER

Dec. 2018/Jan.2019



*United Reformed Church
New Road, Brentwood*

Dear Friends,

I still remember the feeling I had at the first service I led when I was inducted as a minister of this pastorate. I was a little bit nervous, excited, joyful, in wonder and in hope. Then I soon realized that this was not a one-off feeling, but was something I shall live with in every step of my ministry with you.



The United Reformed Church is now focusing on our lifelong Christian discipleship and mission, with the phrase “Walking the Way: Living the life of Jesus today.”

It is interesting to see the footprints in the picture. What link is there between Jesus and footprints? In them I see God’s incarnation, in which God himself placed His foot on this world in our human history. While our eyes look upon the Lord in heavenly places, we can sense His presence in the midst of our ordinary lives.

The footprints also remind me of our own footprints, following the way of Christ, in our ordinary footsteps on the streets, the schools, the work places, the houses of our friends and neighbours, and also our homes.

It is with a similar feeling as I described above (excitement, wonder and hope) that I would like to take a further step with all of you, especially in this period of Advent and Christmas 2018 and the new year 2019. We celebrate Christmas every year again and again, but the footprints that we are going to make this year will never be the same as the last years.

Advent 2018 starts from 2nd December and I invite you to take a fresh journey together with me as we consider the gospel according to Luke. An influential biblical scholar Tom Wright encourages us in this journey in his book, *Advent for Everyone: A Journey through Luke*, saying:

‘With Luke, we find ourselves back in the first century, celebrating the birth of Jesus, walking with Jesus along the dusty roads of his homeland, watching with horror as he goes to his death, and then celebrating with astonished joy as he rises to launch God’s new world. And with that, Luke will help us return to our own day, to ask humbly and seriously what it means for us to walk with Jesus in our own world.’

It will be my privilege to share these footprints with you as we walk the way of Jesus together.

Barnabas Shin

NEWS FROM THE CHURCH SECRETARY

Most people will have received copies of our Christmas events information but for those who have missed them, please have a look at the calendars at the end of the Courier. Here are some extra reminders.

Advent Sunday, 2nd December

As well as the usual morning worship, there will be a collection for the Brentwood Foodbank. Christmas treats are always welcome at this time of year – biscuits, sweets, cakes, puddings and chocolates, as well as the usual everyday items, but please no mince pies. They say they are always inundated with them! Please note that they are not allowed to accept any homemade items and we cannot take cash for this particular collection.

At 5 pm we will be meeting at Buttsbury Church for our annual pastorate Advent service that will be led by our Minister, Barnabas. It is a very atmospheric service by candlelight as regulars will know, but they have no heating or electricity so wrap up warm. If you want to go for the first time and need directions do ask me.

Friday, 7th December

From 5 pm we will be decorating the church for the Christmas season and sharing a take-away supper of fish and chips or pizza afterwards. Come and join in - even if you just want to have supper!

Sunday, 9th December, Toy and Gift Service

The service will be led by Rev Sheila Maxey and our donations will be sent to children in special need in Essex. Thanks to Corne Van Staden for seeing to the distribution of these. New gifts please, suitable for children from 0-15 years. I know that some people have preferred to give cash in the past but this will not be possible now. If you do not have the time or cannot get about so easily I would be happy to buy presents on your behalf (with advice from my grandchildren!) but will need donations at least a week in advance i.e. by 2nd December.

This year's toys and gifts will be going to local families in Brentwood and Basildon area who have children with Child In Need and/or Child Protection Plans.



The Essex County Council Family Support and Protection Teams based in Basildon works with over 300 children and

their families to ensure they are well cared for and safe at home. The families are based in Basildon, Wickford and Brentwood area. The 3 teams employ 8 social workers each who have an enormous task during the Christmas holidays to ensure that the children and families they work with are warm, safe and have enough food. The gifts will alleviate pressure on families to buy presents for children and rather budget for heating with the food banks helping with their extra food needed.

Sunday, 16th December 3.30 pm

PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF TIME. THERE WILL BE NO SERVICE IN THE MORNING. Our traditional service of lessons and carols is always popular so do ask friends and family to join us for this candle-lit service. There will be a collection for CRISIS during the service and some seasonal refreshments before we go home.

Sunday, 24th December – Christmas Eve

Our midnight communion service will begin at 11.15 pm and will be led by Rev Sheila Maxey.

Monday, 25th December – Christmas Day

We have no service at our own church but everyone is very welcome at Brentwood Methodist Church for their Family Worship at 10 am.

If you are going to be away for the Christmas and New Year period, please check if you are on any of our rotas and arrange an exchange. It can be difficult to make last-minute arrangements at this busy time of year.

Finally, we wish all readers of the Courier a very happy and peaceful Christmas and every blessing for the New Year.

Jenny Mayo



CHURCH TREASURER REPORT

The collection for the past two months (September and October) is given below. The average per week both for the whole of the year so far and for the whole of the previous year (2017) for comparison. In addition, a number of members given regular Standing Order donations. A further 25% is also claimed from the Revenue on top of the money given below and from the Standing Orders.

	TOTAL	Loose	Envelopes
Per week Sept-Oct	176.06	41.44	134.63
Total 2018 so far	8,433.93	1,397.95	7,035.98

Per week (43)			
2018	196.14	32.51	163.63
per week 2017	189.86	33.77	175.13

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

The Pastoral Care Group has held its usual bimonthly meeting to ensure that we keep in touch with all our members. We were very glad that Barnabas was able to join us as he is taking a keen interest in the care of the congregation.

The news of the congregation is quite positive at the moment and it is to be hoped that despite the advent of winter everyone will remain in good health.

Carolyn R has spent a few days in hospital with an infection, but is now home again and Clive is doing his best to build up her strength. Ian D is experiencing problems with his eyes and we hope that these will soon be resolved. Jenny M is now making progress with physio for her back and foot problems and we are all grateful as we tend to rely on her hard work a great deal these days.

Our congratulations go to Josh H for his record results in his GCSE exams – he got top marks in every one of his twelve GCSEs. Very well done indeed, Josh.



We have heard that Sheila and Bill C are settled into their new home and are well pleased with it.

The only birthday to celebrate in this issue of News is that of Bill C who will be 86 on 26th December and we will

send him a card just remind him of our good wishes.



We congratulate Heather D. for not one but three achievements at the Brentwood Imperial Youth Band. At the band award night Heather was voted

“Band Personality of the Year” an award voted on by her fellow band members; and she received a large cup with her name engraved on it. At the same time she was promoted to Lance Corporal. Then in a big surprise at the following Band night, Heather was awarded with a prestigious Jack Petchey achievement award. These awards recognise outstanding young people between the ages of 11-25 throughout London and Essex. Heather received a medal, a certificate and £250 to be spent on a band resource. These are outstanding achievements for Heather and we congratulate her on her success.

With the advent of Christmas we are all very busy but hopefully will find time in our lives to keep in touch and care for each other.

Rosalie Brentnall



Christian Aid Christmas Appeal

This year Christian Aid Appeal is focussing on peace-making, in particular funding help for

traumatised children and young people in refugee camps in the Middle East. Nahr al-Bared is a camp in Lebanon which is home to 30,000 Palestinian refugees most of whom have fled the fighting in Syria. There Diana Abbas, a child psychologist , and her team work to improve the mental well-being of children who have suffered and experienced terrible things. This is front-line peacemaking.

The angels' song was 'Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth'. Jesus said: 'Blessed are the peacemakers'.

Please give generously to this important kind of peacemaking. Envelopes will be available during December.

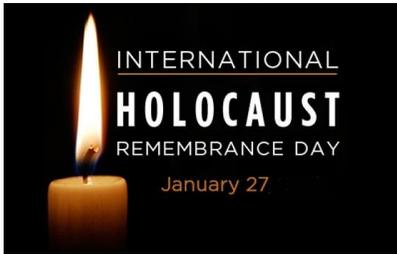
Thank you!

In October we received warm thanks from Commitment for Life for our harvest offering of £303, bringing our total giving to Commitment for Life to £428. Our particular partner is the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committee and our money helps them to help themselves through planting and growing and selling.

In November we received warm thanks from Christian Aid for the £228.85 we sent to the emergency fund to help the victims of the terrible Indonesian earthquake and tsunami. Our money goes towards food, shelter, sanitation, and medical support.

Sheila Maxey

LOOKING AHEAD HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY



January 27th 2019 is Holocaust Memorial Day and this will also mark a new venture for our church when we host the annual exhibition that has been held in Brentwood for some years. This is normally situated at the Town Hall but as this is in the process of having some extensive building works done, we were approached by the fellowship of Christians and Jews who run the event to see if we were willing for it to be housed at the church. The Elders readily agreed and we look forward to welcoming them in January next year.

The exhibition is visited by school parties in the Brentwood area to see the exhibition and hear speakers talk about experiences and the history of the Holocaust. It will also be open to the public and has always been supported by Brentwood Council and our MP, so we can expect a busy few days from Thursday, 24th to Saturday, 26th January when the event takes place.



The organisers are by now very experienced but it would be good if church members could be available to welcome people and to help with any queries that the organisers may have.

More details will be available in the New Year when the details are finalised. In any case, do visit the exhibition if you can – it has always been an inspiring and thought-provoking event.

Jenny Mayo

The changing face of Bethlehem



Situated on what was once a busy road connecting Jerusalem to Bethlehem, this Palestinian home is now surrounded by an 8-metre-high concrete wall. The wall was put up in 2004, separating the family that lives here from

their extended family and the rest of Bethlehem on the other side of the wall. The family used to run a mechanic business, but the wall cut off traffic and access to the rest of the city. They now rent out rooms to tourists and sell handicrafts to make an income.

Near Ayda Refugee Camp and Checkpoint 300 (and Banksy's Walled Off hotel) in Bethlehem, an Ecumenical Accompanier (EA) walks next to the separation barrier. Christian Aid partner, the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI), sends volunteers to the West Bank to monitor and report human rights violations, support all people working non-violently for peace, offer a protective presence and engage in awareness-raising.

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Moving Stories is produced by Commitment for Life, the programme of the United Reformed Church that seeks to raise issues around justice and development. To receive or unsubscribe from **Moving Stories** email linda.mead@urc.org.uk. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the URC

THE POETRY OF CHRISTMAS

In the Christmas edition of the Courier last year, we were reminded of the poems associated with the season, often in the form of hymns and carols. I have a little book at home that I get out every year at this time. I have had it for so long that I can't remember whether I bought it or somebody gave it to me but it's full of Christmas puzzles, Dickensian pictures, a recipe for a Christmas pudding for 28 people(!), music, riddles and the story of the Nativity. It always makes me long to be curled up in front of a blazing fire on a cold winter evening.

It begins and ends with a poem and I hope these will get you in the Christmas mood.

Christmas Bells by Alfred Tennyson

The time draws near the birth of Christ:
The moon is hid; the night is still;
The Christmas bells from hill to hill
Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets round,
From far and near, on mead and moor,
Swell out and fail, as if a door
Were shut between me and the sound:

Each voice four changes on the wind,
That now dilate, and now decrease,
Peace and Goodwill, Goodwill and Peace,
Peace and Goodwill to all mankind.

The Oxen by Thomas Hardy

Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock,
"Now they are all on their knees,"
An elder said as we sat in a flock
By the embers in hearthside ease.

We pictured the meek mild creatures where
They dwelt in their strawy pen,
Nor did it occur to one of us there
To doubt they were kneeling then.

So fair a fancy few would weave
In these years! Yet, I feel,
If someone said on Christmas Eve,
"Come; see the oxen kneel

"In the lonely barton, by yonder coomb
Our childhood used to know",
I should go with him in the gloom,
Hoping it might be so.

Jenny Mayo

**Prayer Partners 2019 explores through prayers based
around 'Life giving faith, defiant hope, generous love'
our new strapline.**

**The prayers can be used for church websites, in magazines,
and for displays to help people focus generosity of mind
and spirit.**

December

Come Lord Jesus.
Come with the frightened.
Come with the poor.
Come with the children.
Come with those who have always been
your friends.
Come and lead us to where you are
and
show us what you want us to do.

January

Come walk with me



when life is tough and burdens heavy.

Come walk with me

when you feel vulnerable and scared.

Come walk with me

when walls divide and relationships fracture.

Come walk with me

Together we can rebuild, lighten loads and give hope.

https://urc.org.uk/images/mission/commitment/mis_resources/Prayer-Partners-2019-Sara-V2.pdf

Christmas Day on the Somme

By Rob Ruggenberg

Australian soldier Leslie George Rub (**picture on the right**) fought and died in the Great War. He was single and one of nine children of a pioneering family (originally from Germany) in Drayton, Queensland. He was a carpenter by trade.



Like so many others he left a diary, some letters and a picture. From these his great-niece Julie Price is now compiling a small book. While reading his letters she came across a gem: the poem *Christmas Day on the Somme*, that her great-uncle apparently wrote in France, in 1916.

The poem doesn't have literary pretensions, but it is universal in expressing the feelings and experiences of the common soldier who tries to survive on one of the most terrible battlefields in history.

The cheerful sarcasm in which Leslie dipped his pen is *so* Australian, that the poem could not have been written by a soldier of any other belligerent country. Only Australians ridiculed the war (and their commanding officers) in this way. That makes this Christmas poem quite unique and refreshing.

Christmas Day On The Somme

'Twas Christmas Day on the Somme
The men stood on parade,
The snow laid six feet on the ground
Twas twenty in the shade.

Up spoke the Captain 'gallant man',
"Just hear what I've to say,
You may not have remembered that
Today is Christmas Day."

"The General has expressed a wish
This day may be observed,
Today you will only work eight hours,
A rest that's well deserved.

I hope you'll keep yourselves quite clean
And smart and spruce and nice,
The stream is frozen hard
But a pick will break the ice."

"All men will get two biscuits each,
I'm sure you're tired of bread,

I'm sorry there's no turkey
but there's Bully Beef instead.

The puddings plum have not arrived
But they are on their way,
I'll guarantee they'll be in time
To eat next Christmas Day."

"You're parcels would have been in time
But I regret to say
The vessel which conveyed them was
Torpedoed on the way.

The Quartermaster's got your rum
But you may get some yet,
Each man will be presented with
A Woodbine Cigarette."

"The Huns have caught us in the rear
And painted France all red,
Pray do not let that trouble you,
Tomorrow you'll be dead.

Now ere you go I wish you all
This season of good cheer,
A very happy Christmas and
A prosperous New Year."

About the author

Leslie George Rub was 23 when he enlisted at Towoomba, Queensland, Australia on 25th August 1915.

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He sailed for Alexandria on board the H.M.A.T. *Wandilla* from Brisbane, Queensland. From Alexandria he was transferred from 26th Battalion to 2nd Pioneers because of his carpentry experience, and sent first to France, and then on to Flanders in Belgium. Some of the places he mentioned in his letters (that were not censored) are Ypres and Bullecourt (where a disastrous battle took place that engendered the greatest distrust and contempt in Australian troops for their British commanders). Leslie came out with a minor wound.

In autumn 1917, seven weeks after the start of the Third Battle of Ypres, Australian troops finally captured Westhoek Ridge, where German strongholds were manned by machinegunners. Three days later Leslie Rub and other men from his company were in the night making a road between Broodseinde Ridge and Westhoek Ridge when they were shelled. Leslie was hit in the kidneys by shrapnel.

He died the next morning, on the 23rd September 1917, at the 1st Australian Ambulance. He is buried at Dickebusch War Cemetery, 5 km southwest of Ypres.

<http://greatwar.nl/frames/default-christmaspoem.html>

**Donate to Christian Aid's
Christmas appeal**

Call us on 0845 7000 300
Donate online at christianaid.org.uk/deliverhope

Good news! The UK Government will match every pound you raise, meaning double the difference for people living in poverty.

Matching your donations with

christian aid  **ukaid**

Donations made to the Christmas appeal between 01/11/14 and 06/01/15 will be matched up to 20 million.
UK registered charity no. 1100283
Company no. 019626. Head office no. 01203902
© Christian Aid September 2014 No. 2001

CHRISTMAS IN THE FIELD 1918



How far have we come from Christmas on the battlefield and rations to switching on Christmas lights and online shopping...remember all those a 100 years ago but also those who now suffer in these modern times with no Christmas tree or lights...still in the midst of war.

DUTY ROTAS – DECEMBER 2018

	Flowers	Vestibule
2nd	Margaret Cheer	Rosie Benjamin
9th	Eileen Goult	Eileen Goult
16th	Christmas Flowers	Mary Tate
23rd	Christmas Flowers	Heather Davidson
30th	Christmas Flowers	Carolyn Rudkin

	Vestry	Steward	Notices
2nd	Moses Tsingano	Mary Tate	Jenny Mayo
9th	Corne Van Staden	Markus Van Staden	Rosalie Brentnall
16th	Rosalie Brentnall	Gabrielle Crowther	Jenny Mayo
23rd	Ian Davidson	Kees Maxey	Stan Francis
30th	Moses Tsingano	Mary Tate	Jenny Mayo

	Reader	Prayers of Intercession
2nd	Rosie Benjamin	Rosie Benjamin
9th	Markus Van Staden	Junior Church
16th	Lucy Crowther	
23rd	Heather Davidson	Jenny Mayo
30th	Moses Tsingano	Ian Davidson

	Coffee
2nd	Elaine Austin
9th	Gabrielle Crowther
16th	Linda Hanna
23rd	Eileen Goult
30th	TBA

CHURCH CALENDAR – DECEMBER 2018

Sunday	2nd	10 am	ADVENT SUNDAY – Mrs Amanda Dolan Harrison Collection for Brentwood Foodbank
		5 pm	Pastorate Advent Service at Buttsbury Church
Monday	3rd	10.15 am	Advent Group at Brentwood Methodist Church
Wednesday	5th	9.30 am	Sacred Space
		11.45 am	Lunch Club Service
		2 pm	URC Knitters
Friday	7th	5 pm	Decorating the Church and take-away supper
Sunday	9th	10 am	Toy and Gift Service – Rev Sheila Maxey
Monday	10th	10.15 am	Advent Group at Brentwood Methodist Church
		2.30 pm	Monday Guild Christmas meeting
Wednesday	12th	9.30 am	Sacred Space
Thursday	13th	7.30 pm	Bible Study Group at 48 St. Thomas Road
Sunday	16th	3.30 pm	Carol Service
Monday	17th	10.15 am	Advent Group at Brentwood Methodist Church
Wednesday	19th	9.30 am	Sacred Space
Sunday	23rd	10 am	Rev Barnabas Shin – Holy Communion
Monday	24th	11.15 pm	Christmas Eve - Midnight Communion Service

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Tuesday 25th 10 am

Christmas Day worship at
Brentwood Methodist Church

Sunday

30th 10 am

Rev Sheila Maxey



DUTY ROTAS – JANUARY 2019

	Flowers	Vestry	
6th	Eileen Goult	Kees Maxey	
13th	Mary Tate	Rosalie Brentnall	
20th	TBC	Rosalie Brentnall	
27th	Margaret Gazely	Ian Davidson	
	Steward	Notices	Reader
6th	Linda Hanna	Jenny Mayo	TBC
13th	Kees Maxey	Rosalie Brentnall	Rosalie Brentnall
20th	Gabrielle Crowther	Jenny Mayo	Lucy Crowther
27th	Margaret Cheer	Stan Francis	Heather Davidson
	Prayers of Intercession	Coffee	
6th	Moses Tsingano	Sally Bealey	

13th	Linda Hanna	Mary Tate
20th	Sally Bealey	Elaine Austin and Margaret Gazely
27th	Clive Rudkin	Gabrielle Crowther

CHURCH CALENDAR – JANUARY 2019

Wednesday 2nd 9.30 am Sacred Space

Sunday 6th 10 am Mrs Beryl Hunt

Wednesday 9th 9.30 am Sacred Space
 Thursday 10th 7.30 pm Bible Study Group at 48 St. Thomas Road

**Sunday 13th 10 am Rev Barnabas Shin
 CHURCH MEETING**

Monday 14th 2.30 pm Monday Guild
 Wednesday 16th 9.30 am Sacred Space
 2 pm URC Knitters

**Sunday 20th 10 am David and Barbara
 Clarke from The Gideons**

Wednesday 23rd 9.30 am Sacred Space
*Thursday 24th to Saturday 26th HOLOCAUST
 MEMORIAL EXHIBITION*

**Sunday 27th 10 am Rev Sheila Maxey - Holy
 Communion**

Wednesday 30th 9.30 am Sacred Space

COMMUNION AIMS FUND



December:

The December collection goes to SNAP (Special Needs and Parents). This is a local charity that helps and supports children and young people with special needs

and their parents.



January:

Brentwood Street Pastors, is part of a nationwide initiative active in Brentwood. The first ever patrol of Street Pastors in Brentwood was on Friday 19th August 2011. A special commissioning service was held on the same day, at Sawyers Church, Sawyers Hall Layne, Brentwood.

Prayer Calendar for December and January

Week Beginning:

December 2nd The Church as it celebrates Advent
Brentwood Methodist Church (sharing Advent meetings with us)

People who work in the retail sector

December 9th The Wednesday Luncheon Club (Christmas dinner 12th December)

Our Junior Church

Children in need (Toy and Gift service today)

December 16th The Church as it celebrates Christmas
Christmas events in our Pastorate
CRISIS and its work at Christmas

December 23rd People in need or under stress at Christmas
Children and families known to us
People who have to work at Christmas time

December 30th The Life and Mission of our church in 2019
Our Minister, the Elders and other leaders
Those persecuted for their faith

January 6th A more peaceful world
Prisoners and the Prison Service
BSCWT and its work in schools

January 13th Youth Work in our Churches (URC Youth
Assembly from 18th Jan.)
Christian Unity (Unity Week begins 18th January
Churches Together in Brentwood

January 20th People in need in our area
PARK, our Commitment for Life project
Those who use our building

January 27th Victims of racial injustice (Holocaust Memorial
Day)
Refugees and Asylum seekers
The Brentwood Food Bank

SOMETHING FOR THE ADVENT BRAINS

Merry Christmas!

j e s u s a k i g b g b s x e
 m d o n k e y u e c y d k n c
 u d b x k b z l i o m t f t p
 o a w e z n l c k n i x e u t
 b n n a s s l l n i s a o r p
 w g e n c a t m k b t s w k i
 e e m j r a k f d a l m g e u
 n l r r a m n d m u e t x y b
 k l a u c i o d v b t c n g n
 j t b j k t d c l l o k h d s
 s r d g e w i f l e e o p m x
 y e r s r n u q x c l i g h t y
 j e v b r e l i m l r p k e l
 b s a n t a w n y d a v e s s
 c f r t e h s h c u e s a m x

candle	bauble	santa	cracker	bells
elf	Jesus	turkey	angel	holly
donkey	star	xmas	mistletoe	tree

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BRENTWOOD UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

New Road, Brentwood, CM14 4GD

SUNDAY WORSHIP

10:00 am Family Worship with Creche and Junior Church

Holy Communion is usually celebrated at Morning Worship on the last Sunday of each month.

Details of preachers and special events are given in the COURIER.

EACH WEEK:

Brownies: To be confirmed

WEDNESDAYS: 12:00pm Luncheon Club

FRIDAYS: 09:45am – 11:45am Coffee Shop

