

## The Week Ahead

The Methodist Church 

Hi everyone,

*It's all getting a bit seasonal here in the office - be warned that next week's mailing will be something of a Christmas video-fest!*

*In the meantime, I must offer a **correction** to last week's mailing. My apologies to those who tuned in to Radio Vixon at the weekend to hear the Revd Sue Pegg's Christmas show. Apparently the show will now be broadcast in the afternoon on Christmas Day, but I'm afraid I don't know what time. Apologies for any confusion I may have caused!*

*It's also worth noting that next Thursday (18 December) is **Charles Wesley's Birthday** - happy birthday, Charles!*

*I will be staffing the out-of-hours support line this week (07881783812).*

*Wishing you all a wonderful week,*

*Anna*



## On the box

### Question Time

**Tonight, 10:35pm, BBC1**

David Dimbleby chairs a topical debate from Canterbury in Kent, in which panellists Conservative Communities and Local Government

## Christmas message

The President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference will be publishing their Christmas message next Friday (19 December), when it will also appear in the Methodist Recorder and online as a podcast. But you can **get your hands on an embargoed copy** of the message tomorrow if you sign up to our press release mailing list [here](#).

## An appealing Christmas

Christmas is a **time for giving** - perhaps you might consider donating to one of the Christmas appeals run by our partner charities?

- [MHA's Christmas Friendship Appeal](#) will help them continue their work with vulnerable people.
- The UK Government has promised to double every pound donated to this year's [Christian Aid appeal](#).
- [Action For Children's appeal](#) is all about keeping children safe.

## Grants for roofs and gutters

In the Chancellor's (3 December) Autumn Statement, a new, one-off grant scheme for roofs and gutters of listed places of worship was announced. Fifteen million pounds is available, for grants of between £10k and £100k. But the timescales for applications are exceptionally short - though if you are awarded a grant, you will then have reasonable time to complete the work. Fortunately you don't need to be too far down the road to apply, but anyone wishing to benefit from this will need to move fast, as applications have to be in **by the end of January**. There is a dedicated website [here](#) and the Church of England has published some guidance [here](#).

## Free Table Talk app


Minister Penny Mordaunt, Shadow International Development Secretary Mary Creagh, Ukip leader Nigel Farage, comedian and campaigner Russell Brand and The Times columnist Camilla Cavendish face topical questions from the audience.

**Canterbury Cathedral: Not Set in Stone**  
**Friday, 9pm, BBC2**

The first in a series covering a year in the life of Canterbury Cathedral. The new archbishop Justin Welby celebrates his first Christmas in the position, the cathedral's Great South Window is taken down for restoration and a new girls' choir makes its mark after 1,400 years of male domination.

**Songs of Praise**  
**Sunday, 4:25pm, BBC1**

Jermain Jackman, winner of The Voice, visits a school to set them a Christmas carol challenge. Plus there is a chance to sing along with festive favourites from around the country.

 **Radio**

**Becoming Myself: Gender Identity**  
**Friday, 11am, BBC Radio 4**

The first of two documentaries exploring the phenomenon of gender dysphoria and analysing the heightened profile of transpeople, such as boxing promoter Frank Maloney and WikiLeaks source Chelsea Manning.

**Sunday Morning With...**  
**Sunday, 7:05am, BBC Radio Scotland**  
Radio Scotland's weekly religion and ethics

Table Talk for Christmas is an all age family game that creates space for friends and family to **explore the big and not-so-big questions** of the Christmas story. Players are given an opportunity to explore some of life's big and not-so-big questions, articulate their views, and to engage with the opinions of others. The resource was written by Lucy Moore (Messy Church), the Revd Jo Cox and Paul Griffiths. The app is currently free to download - click here to download it through [Google Play](#) (for Android devices) and [here](#) for the App Store.

## A retreat with a difference

Cliff College is now taking bookings for its first **Creative Arts Retreat** weekend in February 2015. It will be a time to create and reflect, a weekend of talking and exploring about Jesus, creativity, ourselves and the things that matter. Find out more and book [here](#).

## Know someone up for a challenge?

Tearfund ICS is a 10 week, government-funded volunteer placement for **18-25 year olds** that offers the opportunity to make a difference in local communities in some of the poorest places in the world. Teams travel to Bolivia, Rwanda, Bangladesh or South Africa volunteering on a range of projects from teaching, construction, agriculture, HIV prevention work and water and sanitation. You can apply online [here](#) or [email Abigail Brown](#) for more info.

## Easter School in Cambridge

Wesley House, Cambridge, is now taking bookings for its Easter School 2015. This is an opportunity for preachers and worship leaders to hear from and quiz leading academics on the **theology of the Passion**. With time for devotions and reflections as well, it's set to be a really inspiring Holy Week course. Find out more [here](#).

## This week in Parliament

Next week's parliamentary business can be found [online here](#).

## Reflections

In the coming week the [Prayer Handbook](#) will be encouraging us to pray with Christians in West Africa,

programme asks 'Who are the Methodists?'

**Sunday Worship:  
The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me**

**Sunday, 8:10am,  
BBC Radio 4**

The third in the Advent series live from St Martin-in-the-Fields, London, exploring the nature of Jesus's ministry and the social and economic climate in which he preached.

**Pause for Thought  
Thursday, 5:45am, BBC  
Radio 2**

The Revd Michaela Youngson contributes.

**The Invisible Age  
Monday, 8pm,  
BBC Radio 4**

Matthew Sweet asks the question of why people are so anxious about old age in an attempt to understand society's worries about growing old.

See [The Radio Times](#) for further listings.

Britain and Ireland. The theme for next week's [A Word in Time](#) Bible studies is **The Lord's Anointed**, written by the Revd Gareth Hill

## Video Thursday: #ChristmasStarts

This year's Christmas retail ads lay claim to the 'magic' of Christmas. But it's not celebrities singing about turkeys, nostalgic chocolate bars or happy penguins that lie at the heart of the season. [This week's video](#) is an advert that captures the real spirit of Christmas.

*The Week Ahead* is a regular mailing that aims to give people a heads up on upcoming events and opportunities, as well as highlighting new information and resources. We don't always remember everything, so please do [email us](#) if you have any feedback or ideas for items to include.

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