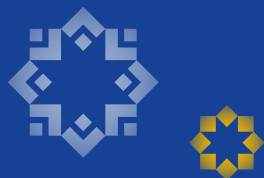




WHAT'S ON IN KINGSTON FOR YOU, YOUR FRIENDS & FAMILY



Dear Neighbours,



I'm delighted to welcome you to the Christmas edition of *Share Life*. The Christmas story is filled with people and moments that continue to capture hearts even 2,000 years later. At the centre are Mary, Joseph and the baby in a manger – surrounded by shepherds, wise men, angels, and even King Herod.

Cornerstone Church Kingston is delighted to be involved in the Operation Christmas Child shoe box appeal. You can read two real-life stories of the impact these simple Christmas packs had on two of our members when they were living in Bolivia and Pakistan.

Also you can see some of our upcoming Christmas events at Cornerstone Church.

Happy reading, and we wish you all a very happy Christmas!

Pete Woodcock

Pastor, Cornerstone Church Kingston

For more information please visit cstone.uk/christmas*

EVENT KEY

A

Adults

F

Families

Y

Youth

C

Craft

**Children's
activities on
pages 6 & 7**

Cover illustration by Julia Austen

* All events are free and take place at The Cornerstone Hub, 234a Canbury Park Road, unless specified otherwise. Each event will include a short explanation about our church and what we believe. Please sign up now at cstone.uk/christmas if you'd like to come.

THE CHRISTMAS JOURNEY

Wed 10 Dec, 4:00–6:00pm

Cornerstone Hub

*Book your 30-minute slot
now at cstone.uk/christmas
to avoid disappointment*

**SPECIAL
EVENT**

An interactive re-telling of the first ever Christmas for children. Puppets, actors and all the senses are used to bring this familiar story alive.



.....

Christmas Carols in Kingston A F

Sat 6 Dec, 11:00am

Kingston Market Place, all welcome

£ Free – no booking required

Come and hear the Cornerstone choir perform some carols in Kingston including a special appearance by the children from Hub Club.

.....

Christmas Lights & Christian Heritage Walk in London A F

Sat 6 Dec, 1:00pm

Waterloo Station, all welcome

£ Free – book at cstone.uk/christmas

Meet us at Waterloo Station under the clock. The walk will take in multiple London attractions, the best of the capital's Christmas lights and a variety of historical insights.

.....

International Café:

The Christmas Journey A

Tue 9 Dec, 7:00–9:30pm

Cornerstone Hub, all welcome

£ Free – no booking required

A place to learn English, make friends and eat together. Join us for a private viewing of *The Christmas Journey* and some Christmas snacks.

.....

Men Behaving Dadly: Christmas Takeover F

Sat 13 Dec, 10:00–11:30am

Cornerstone Hub, for children under 5

£ Free – book at cstone.uk/christmas

Dads, bring along your kids aged 0–5 for this Saturday morning meet-up. Christmas is taking over, so put on your festive sweaters and expect warm pigs in blankets and racing reindeer ride-ons.



A F

HE'S HERE FAMILY CAROLS

**SPECIAL
EVENT**

Sun 14 Dec, 10:30am–12:00pm

Tiffin School, all welcome

£ Free – no booking required

Join us at this all-age family service to sing carols, watch a short nativity prepared by the Hub Club children and hear about the true meaning of Christmas. Children are welcome to come dressed as a nativity character.

Monday Tots: Christmas Party

F

Mon 15 Dec, 9:30–11:00am

Cornerstone Hub, for children under 5

£ Free – book at cstone.uk/christmas now to avoid disappointment

It's celebration time at this weekly tots group, where the normal double session will combine into one for a Christmas extravaganza.

Hub Club: Christmas Party

F

Wed 17 Dec, 4:30–6:30pm

Cornerstone Hub, for children aged 5–11

£ Free – book at cstone.uk/christmas

Join us for festive party games, a Christmas Bible story, crafts and a Christmas dinner. Parents and carers can join the fun at 6:00pm to hear the children sing and perform a taster of their nativity.

Soul: Christmas Carnival

Y

Fri 19 Dec, 7:00–8:30pm

Cornerstone Hub, for 11–14 year-olds

£ Free – book at cstone.uk/christmas

Our weekly youth group sessions are packed full of fun and laughter as we discover Jesus and undertake a wide range of activities. Come and enjoy a variety of Christmas stalls and games with food and drink.

Rooted: Christmas Carnival

Y

Fri 20 Dec, 8:00–10:00pm

Cornerstone Hub, for 15–18 year-olds

£ Free – book at cstone.uk/christmas

Our weekly social group for teenagers includes a wide range of activities and a talk from the Bible. Come and enjoy an evening around the campfire with sweet Christmas food and drink.



SPECIAL EVENT

A TASTE OF CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD

Sun 14 Dec, 6:00–8:00pm
Tiffin School, all welcome
£ Free – no booking required

Come and take the opportunity to taste traditional Christmas food from every continent before enjoying a traditional carol service (with an international twist). The service is aimed at adults but children are welcome to attend with their parents. Food-tasting from 6:00pm; service at 6:30pm.

.....

Hub Crafts:
Christmas Decorations
Sat 20 Dec, 11:00am–1:00pm
Cornerstone Hub, all welcome
£ Free – book at cstone.uk/christmas

C A

Join us to finish off your own craft project or to make a Christmas decoration. All the materials will be provided so that you can have a new decoration to take home with you.

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE

Thu 25 Dec, 10:00–11:00am
Tiffin School, all welcome
£ Free – no booking required

Join us on Christmas Day to reflect on the reason we celebrate this special season. This joyful service will include singing carols, a Bible reading and a short sermon suitable for all ages. Children will also get a chance to show a Christmas present they've received. Everyone is welcome.

SPECIAL EVENT



A F

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD



This year Cornerstone Church Kingston is supporting Operation Christmas Child. This is organised by **Samaritan's Purse International** – the idea is to fill a shoebox with all kinds of goodies for children in need around the world. Children that don't normally receive anything at Christmas.

Here are the stories of Adnan and Regina, who received these boxes when they were children. Adnan and Regina are now with us in the UK and are members of Cornerstone Church Kingston.

Photos on page 4 courtesy of Samaritan's Purse





Adnan

When I was a young boy growing up in Pakistan, my sister and I used to go to Sunday school together. One year, we took part in a big Sunday school rally where children from all over the country came to participate. I still remember that day so clearly, the excitement, the laughter and the energy all around us.

During the event, we were told that every child would receive a special gift box. It was distributed by a foreign ministry, and inside that simple plastic container were so many wonderful things, colouring pens, notebooks, small toys, and even play dough. For us, those were treasures.

I can still remember the joy I felt when I opened my box. Everything inside was so bright, so new and so special, things that weren't easy for us to buy at that time. I cherished each item, and I still have many of those gifts even today. They remind me of that beautiful moment when love and generosity reached us from across the world.

I'll never forget the smiles on the faces of all the children that day. Every box brought pure happiness.

It wasn't just about the gifts, it was about the love behind them. That shoebox reminds me how small acts of kindness can touch hearts in the most powerful way.

Regina

As a child in Bolivia, Christmas was always a sad time because in my family we already did not have enough food to eat, so we didn't have spare money for presents. Seeing other children with presents was hard.

I have many sad memories at that age, although I also have amazing memories of being part of a church family. At the age of 12, at church, I got a shoebox wrapped with present paper. I was very surprised when I opened the box, seeing all the beautiful things in there. Things that I never imagined existed. I had stickers, colours, pencils, socks, hair clips, small books to colour, a toothbrush and more!

I cannot remember if the box had a message in it but whether yes or no, I am sure someone was praying for me. Today, I love God and I want to follow him. He loves me, he gave his son Jesus for me. I pray that my child will love and follow him too.

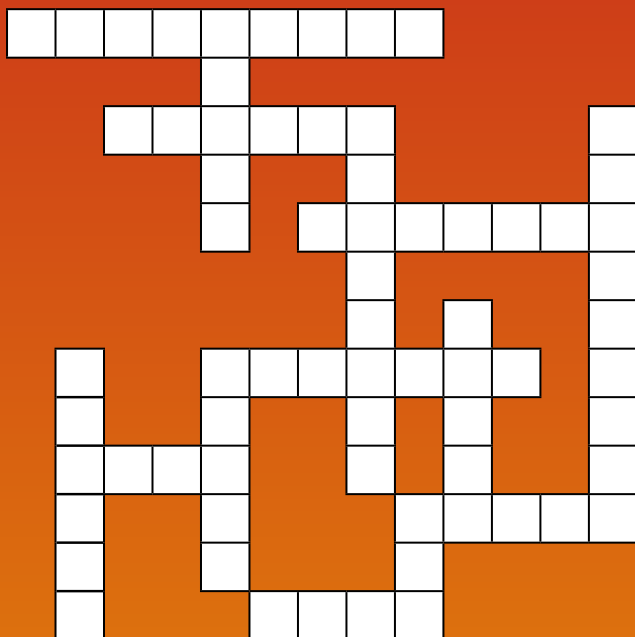


Find out more about
Operation Christmas Child at
occ.samaritans-purse.org.uk



CHRISTMAS CROSS

3 letters	JOY
4 letters	STAR MARY
5 letters	JESUS LIGHT PEACE WORLD
6 letters	ANGELS JOSEPH
7 letters	RESCUER WISEMEN
8 letters	SHEPHERD
9 letters	BETHLEHEM CHRISTMAS



CORNERSTONE ADVENT CALENDAR

Check out our giant advent calendar at the Cornerstone Hub, 234a Canbury Park Road, Kingston, KT2 6LF. Write down the names of the nativity characters who appear in the windows on the dates below!



1

2

3

4

5

To listen to the story about each character, visit our Facebook or Instagram page @cornerstonechurchkingston

NATIVITY

COLOUR BY NUMBERS



1 = Blue 2 = Yellow 3 = Green 4 = Red 5 = Brown 6 = Skin



THE CHRISTMAS CAST

ANGELS

MARY & JOSEPH
JESUS
HEROD

ABBA once sang: *"I believe in angels, something good in everything I see."* And Robbie Williams asked: *"Does an angel contemplate my fate?... I'm loving angels instead."*

Do you believe in angels? The Bible certainly does – with around 300 references to angels, 182 of them in the New Testament. If you believe the Bible, you'll believe in angels – but not the way they're often pictured.



The angels of Scripture aren't chubby cherubs from greeting cards. They are God's holy warriors – more like divine messengers on mission than children in tinsel crowns. In the Christmas story, these angels are far more than decoration – they carry a message of hope for a weary world.

Messengers from heaven

The word *angel* means “messenger”. Throughout the Bible, they appear at key moments in God's plan – and at Christmas, they announce the greatest news of all: the arrival of Jesus, the Saviour.

Gabriel and Mary

Gabriel appears first, sent to a young woman in Nazareth: ***“Do not be afraid, Mary, [for] you have found favour with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.”*** (Luke 1:30–31, *The Bible, New International Version*). Mary's response is simple yet astonishing: ***“I am the Lord's servant. May your word to me be fulfilled.”*** (Luke 1:38)

The angel and Joseph

Joseph, deeply troubled by Mary's pregnancy, receives comfort through another angelic message in a dream: ***“Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife... You are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”*** (Matthew 1:24–25)

The angels and the shepherds

On the night of Jesus' birth, shepherds see the sky fill with glory as an angel proclaims: ***“Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people...”*** (Luke 2:10–11)

Then a multitude of angels appears, praising God: ***“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests.”*** (Luke 2:14). What a moment – heaven breaking into earth with a song of peace and joy!

These angels remind us that Christmas is more than sentiment. It's the moment God entered history to bring peace, forgiveness and new life through Jesus Christ.

Their message for us

The message first came to ordinary people – Mary, Joseph, shepherds – and it still comes to ordinary people today. Jesus came for everyone, not just the religious or the righteous.

The angels declared peace – not just world peace, but the kind that comes from knowing Jesus, the Prince of Peace. This Christmas, listen again to their message: ***“A saviour has been born to you; He is the Messiah, [or Christ] the Lord.”*** (Luke 2:11). Will you receive him?



Mary: a young woman with a tremendous trust

When the angel Gabriel appeared to her, Mary was a teenager from an ordinary town. The message must have shaken her world: ***“You will conceive and give birth to a son... The Holy Spirit will come on you.”*** (Luke 1:31, 35)

This miracle came with great cost. In her culture, pregnancy before marriage could mean rejection or worse. Yet Mary’s response was immediate and trusting: ***“I am the Lord’s servant... May your word to me be fulfilled.”*** (v38). That’s faith – trusting God even when it doesn’t make sense.

Joseph: a man of quiet strength

Joseph never says a word in Scripture, but his actions say everything. When he discovered Mary was pregnant, he planned to end their engagement quietly, not wanting to disgrace her. Then an angel appeared to him in a dream, explaining that the child was from God. Joseph didn’t argue or hesitate. He obeyed. Later, when the angel told him to flee to Egypt to protect Jesus, he again acted immediately.

Joseph’s example reminds us that obedience doesn’t always need to be loud. Sometimes it’s simply steady and faithful.

Ordinary people – extraordinary God

Mary and Joseph were human. They had doubts and fears. But they were willing, available and obedient – and through them, God changed the world.

A challenge for us

Their story challenges us: Will we trust God when life feels uncertain? Will we obey even when it costs us something?

MARY & JOSEPH

At the heart of the Christmas story stands a young couple swept into the most extraordinary event in history. Mary and Joseph weren’t famous or powerful – yet their quiet faith and courage still speak to us today.

When God calls us to follow, will we answer as Mary did: ***"I am the Lord's servant"?***

The greatest gift

Mary and Joseph's obedience led to the birth of Jesus – the true hero of Christmas. He came not just to be born, but to die and rise again, bringing forgiveness and life to all who believe.

This Christmas, don't just admire their faith. Follow their example. Say "yes" to God – you never know how he might use your life.

JESUS



Every Christmas we give gifts, sing carols and celebrate – all because of him. But amid the lights and the noise, one question still matters most: who is Jesus?

More than a baby in a manger

Jesus' story didn't begin in Bethlehem. ***"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."*** (John 1:1). He is not just a teacher or prophet. He is God himself – the eternal Word who became flesh and lived among us. The Creator stepped into his creation. The King of heaven became a servant on earth.

Why did he come?

The answer lies in the greatest problem of all: sin. ***"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."*** (Romans 3:23). We were made to know and love God, but we have each turned away. And no amount of effort or goodness can bridge that gap. We needed rescue – a Saviour. That's why Jesus came. ***"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."*** (1 Timothy 1:15)

From the cradle to the cross

The wooden manger pointed forward to a wooden cross. Jesus lived the perfect life we couldn't live, and then gave his life for ours. ***"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."*** (2 Corinthians 5:21)

Three days later, he rose again – proving his victory over death and offering eternal life to all who believe.

Don't miss him this Christmas

It's easy to admire Jesus from a distance – as part of the decorations, the tradition and the story. But he didn't just come to be admired. He came to be known, loved and followed.

This is the gift of Christmas: forgiveness, hope and life through Jesus Christ. And like any gift, it must be received.



HEROD

When we picture Christmas, we think of peace – shepherds in fields, angels singing and a baby asleep in a manger. But there's also a darker part of the story: King Herod's violent attempt to destroy the newborn king.

A king who wouldn't bow

Herod ruled Judea under Roman power – ambitious and clever, but consumed by paranoia. When wise men arrived asking, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?” Herod was disturbed – and afraid. To him, Jesus was not a gift, but a threat.

When the wise men didn't return, he unleashed his rage, ordering the death of every baby boy in Bethlehem under two. Why? Because Herod refused to let anyone else be king – even God.

Herod's problem – and ours

Herod's problem wasn't disbelief; it was pride. He believed enough to ask the priests where the promised king would be born. He believed the wise men's story. But still – he refused to bow. And before we distance ourselves too quickly, we should ask: are we really that different?

We, too, like to stay in control – of our plans, our choices, our priorities... we want to be king of our own lives. But Jesus didn't come to take part in our story – he came to take his rightful place as king.

The true King

Herod used power to take life – Jesus used his power to give it. Jesus laid aside his crown to wear a crown of thorns so that we could be reconciled to God. The King of heaven was born to save.

But we must respond. Jesus doesn't ask to be admired at Christmas – he asks to be received as Lord. *“To all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.”* (John 1:12)



The big question this Christmas

So how will you respond? Like Herod – clinging to control and resisting God's rule? Or like the wise men – bowing in worship to the One who truly deserves your heart?

Come with your knowledge of 2025 at the ready for this New Year quiz night. Bring a team or join a table for some fun and brain-teasing rounds. There will be a short Christian talk and plenty of festive nibbles and drinks.



If you want to know more about the Christian faith, why not listen to some of our podcasts? cstone.uk/podcasts





Cornerstone Hub

234a Canbury Park Road
Kingston, KT2 6LF

Tiffin School

Queen Elizabeth Road
Kingston, KT2 6RL

cstone.uk/christmas



**CORNERSTONE
CHURCH
KINGSTON**