

# Whitehead & Islandmagee Methodist Churches

Methodist Manse Whitehead  
2 Balmoral Avenue, Whitehead, BT38 9QA

Dear Friends

Advent 2015

As we journey through the Advent season and on into Christmas we will be hearing the stories of hope on which our faith is based. People walking in darkness see a great light; and that great light of love and peace has come into the world not just to brighten the place up, but to bring the Gospel of salvation to all.

At a time when the perversion of religion is causing so much grief and pain across the globe it would do us good to evaluate what we have and who we are in faith. Is your Christianity more than something that you do on a Sunday? More than a religious habit? Our only hope for the future is in our living relationship with God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit – Three in One, One in Three.

Matthew 11:28-30

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion?

Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life.

I'll show you how to take a real rest.

Walk with me and work with me - watch how I do it.

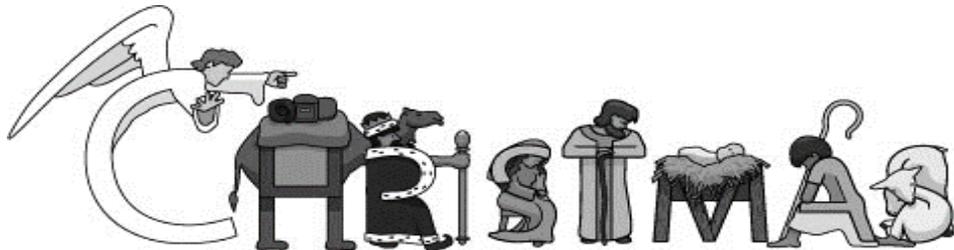
*Learn the unforced rhythms of grace.*

*I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you.*

Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.” The Message

Join us as we celebrate the birth of Christ, pray with us for those who may be far from home defending our freedom, and those close to home who enable us to carry on with our lives in freedom here in the United Kingdom. Let us stand together as a community of living faith and remember Christ who was born into homelessness and poverty, who was a refugee in a foreign land because of persecution, and who was ultimately prosecuted to the end of his earthly life for His teachings and beliefs. God bless from my home to yours.

*Gary, Susan, John & James*



CHRISTMAS IS THE CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS, THE SAVIOUR OF MANKIND

# Services for Christmas and Advent 2015

## Whitehead Methodist Church

Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> December 10:30am	Family Service
Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup> December 10:30am	Carol Service
Christmas Day 10:30am	Family Service
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> December 10:30am	Morning Worship
Thursday 31 <sup>st</sup> December 11:15pm	Watchnight Service
Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup> January 10:30am	Covenant Service (Communion)

## Islandmagee Methodist Church

Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> December 12:00pm	Family Service – Mulled Punch and shortbread from 11:30am
Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup> December 12:00pm	Carol Service
Christmas Day 09:30am	Family Service
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> December 12:00pm	Morning Worship
Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup> January 12:00pm	Covenant Service (Communion)

Robert Zemeckis, not only directed the animated movie The Polar Express but helped write the screenplay. He said, “*This is a story everyone can relate to. So many of us, as children or adults, have questioned our belief in something or gone through the process of having our faith tested and restored. Kids can take the story literally as a journey to find Santa Claus, while older readers understand it as a metaphor for much bigger ideas. It deals with the symbols of Christmas but at its core is a universal story about belief in things you don't completely see or understand.*”

The conductor on the Polar Express says that the most important things in the world are the things you cannot see. And he's right, the most important of those happened over 2000 years ago in the small village of Bethlehem and culminated on a cross in Jerusalem. And when that Babe of Bethlehem became the Christ of Calvary He also became our “ticket.” Not to the North Pole but, at the end of our life's journey, to a place of perfection.

