

John 3:16 reminds us that whoever believes in Him “should not perish but have eternal life.” The birth of Christ marks the beginning of the fulfilment of God’s plan to redeem His people. Through Christ, God offers us the greatest gift—eternal life in His presence. This offer of salvation is extended to all who place their faith in Jesus. Christmas is a reminder that the door of grace is open; through faith in the Son, we are brought into God’s family and given a new, eternal hope.

As we celebrate Christmas, let us remember that the lights, decorations, and gifts point to the true light and gift—Jesus Himself, God’s ultimate expression of love. We celebrate the arrival of Emmanuel, “God with us,” who came not only to be born but to die and rise, securing for us a living hope. This Christmas season, let us share this hope and proclaim the love of God revealed in Christ. May our hearts overflow with gratitude, echoing the joy of the angels who proclaimed, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!” (Luke 2:14). The gift of Jesus is a gift for the world—a love beyond all measure and a joy beyond all comprehension.

Francois Van Staden  
Teaching Elder

### Additional Details

#### Creative English Classes

Mondays, 10.00pm-12.00pm

A 10 week English course at GHCF finishing on 9th December

Please speak to Rachael for further details

#### Sunday School

Sunday 15th December, 10.30am

Christmas Party

## Dates to Remember

### DECEMBER 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<b>1</b> <b>10.30am</b> Morning Service  <b>6.00pm</b> Evening Service	<b>2</b> <b>10.30am</b> Ladies Coffee Morning  <b>6.00pm</b> Going Bananas	<b>3</b> <b>7.30pm</b> Prayer Meeting	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> <b>10.30am</b> Coffee Morning	<b>6</b> <b>7.30pm-9.00pm</b> EPIC	<b>7</b> <b>9.00am-2.00pm</b> Soul Food  Speak to Rob Pickering for further details.
<b>8</b> <b>10.30am</b> Morning Service with Breaking of Bread  <b>6.00pm</b> Evening Service	<b>9</b> <b>10.30am</b> Ladies Coffee Morning  <b>6.30pm</b> Going Bananas	<b>10</b> <b>7.30pm</b> Prayer Meeting	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> <b>10.30am</b> Coffee Morning	<b>13</b> <b>7.30pm-9.00pm</b> EPIC	<b>14</b> <b>10.00am-12.00pm</b> Who Let the Dads Out
<b>15</b> <b>10.30am</b> Morning Service  <b>6.00pm</b> Evening Service	<b>16</b> <b>10.30am</b> Ladies Coffee Morning  <b>6.30pm</b> Going Bananas Nativity	<b>17</b> <b>7.30pm</b> Prayer Meeting	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> <b>10.30am</b> Morning Service  <b>3.30pm</b> Carol Service and Christingle	<b>23</b> <b>10.30am</b> Ladies Coffee Morning	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> <b>10.30am</b> Christmas Day Service	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> <b>10.30am</b> Morning Service with Breaking of Bread  No Evening Service	<b>30</b> <b>10.30am</b> Ladies Coffee Morning	<b>31</b> <b>11.30pm</b> Watchnight Service	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

## Weekly Meetings

<b>Monday</b>	<b>10.30am Ladies Coffee Morning</b> Otto's Café, Queen Street, Great Harwood
	<b>6.30pm-7.30pm Going Bananas</b> Kids group at GHCF for children of Primary School age
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>7.30pm Prayer Meeting at GHCF</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>2.00pm Equipping the Saints</b> Bible Study
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>10.30am Coffee Morning at GHCF</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>7.30pm-9.00pm EPIC</b> Youth group for children of Secondary School age

**Please see attached calendar for changes to weekly meetings.**

## December 2024

Great Harwood Christian Fellowship

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## Devotion

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### God's Love for the World in John 3:16

As we enter December, the month when we celebrate the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, our hearts naturally turn to reflect on the love of God revealed in that wondrous event. Few verses capture the depth of God's love for the world as powerfully as John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

The verse begins with the beautiful declaration, "For God so loved the world." This love is not merely a passive sentiment but an active, purposeful love. In Scripture, the word "world" often represents not just creation but humanity in all its rebellion, lostness, and brokenness. That God would love a world marked by sin and estrangement from Him is astounding. Yet, out of His own character, God chooses to love not because we deserve His love, but because He is love (1 John 4:8). His love is unearned, undeserved, and unbreakable. This truth should fill us with awe and thanksgiving as we remember that our salvation is rooted not in our worthiness, but in the sheer grace of God.

The measure of this love is shown in the gift of His only Son. At Christmas, we celebrate the incarnation—God Himself coming down to dwell among us, taking on flesh, and entering into our world as the baby born in Bethlehem. The apostle Paul marvels at this wonder in Philippians 2, writing that Jesus "emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men." The Son of God, who was with the Father from eternity, was born into humble circumstances, experiencing our struggles, pain, and even death. God's love was so great that He did not withhold His own Son but sent Him to be our Saviour. The cross, ultimately, was the purpose for which Christ was born. The cradle points to the cross, and in this lies the heart of Christmas: the gift of salvation through the sacrifice of Jesus.