

## Celebrating Together A Very Happy Christmas to You

As we say farewell to 2013 and welcome 2014, it is a moment to look back at the year and look forward to the future.

Christmas is a time when families come together and this has been a year when the families of the churches in this area have been doing just that. As with most families, there is so much more that we share in common than there is on which we differ. We, as ministers in these communities, have been meeting together, praying and supporting one another ever since we arrived.

However, this has developed more over the past year. The Anglican and Baptist churches have come together to host a family activity week, which we followed up with a Good Friday café and re-telling of the Easter story. More recently, this has developed and grown into a monthly gathering for members of families of all ages, called Hope Street. All of these have



happened right in the centre of our communities, in our school. And it is Hope that we celebrate at this time of year. Hope in God, who does not stay away, but comes as a baby, to be with us, to move in to our street and share in our hopes and joys,

sorrows and pains. One who meets our every hope; the carol 'O little town of Bethlehem' sums this up in the line 'The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.'

We, as churches in this place, also seek to bring hope as we share the Good News of Christmas.

So, this Christmas time, 'May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.' Romans 15:13

Grace, peace, hope, and a very Happy Christmas to you,

**Rev'd John Witts and Rev'd Kate Stacey**

## Nancy to the Rescue

In our last issue we had an appeal for information from Richard Young, who has traced his family roots in Ascott and Shipton as far back as the late 1600s.

Barely had the magazine dropped on the mats of our postal subscribers than our old friend Nancy Andrews was on the phone. She has a family tree going back several hundred years showing the Young and Gomm family connections.

A quick phone call put her in touch with Richard and, after a long chat, a meeting was arranged. We await further news of this meeting and will let you know how things progress.