

Oakwood Chapel's regular meetings

Sundays

10.00 a.m. Morning service, with children during the morning service. *Acorn Club, Twigs & Tetris* are for school-age children.

6.30 p.m. Evening service

Tuesdays

7.00 p.m. Prayer meeting

Wednesdays

10.00 a.m. Coffee morning

Fridays

6.30 p.m. Home fellowship

Saturdays

9.00 a.m. Prayer meeting

A crèche is available for young children during the morning service. *Acorn Club, Twigs and Tetris* are for school-age children.

During the week, we meet regularly for Bible study, prayer and fellowship, in different members' homes. For more details, please contact us!

Our coffee morning runs during school term-time.



Oakleaves

from

OAKWOOD CHAPEL

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Christmas

2025

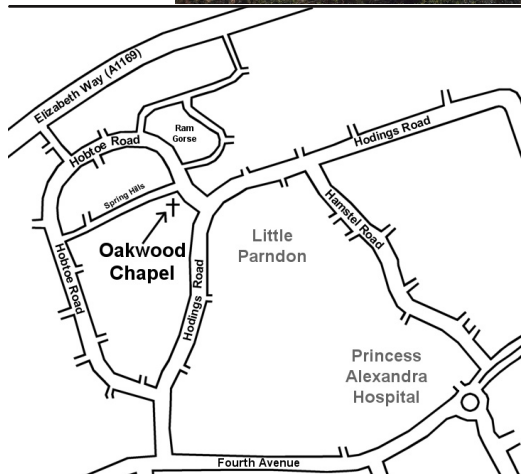
Festive lights

As I write this, it's almost the end of November. Christmas still seems a quite long way off, even though I know I really should have started my Christmas shopping. Even so, as each day passes, I see more and more houses with their Christmas lights up, brightening the dark evenings. Of course, by the time you're reading this, Christmas will be much closer and everyone will be busy finishing off their preparations.

However, I must admit that even though I pretend to grumble a bit about seeing Christmas lights up even at the beginning of November, secretly I enjoy them. Oops! I suppose it's not such a secret now...

What is it about Christmas lights that I like so much? It's not just the twinkling or the gaudy colours. In fact I prefer simple displays with just one or two colours of lights, rather than multi-coloured, all-singing, all-dancing, full-on razzmatazz that some people go for. But whatever kind of Christmas lights they are, they bring light and a splash of colour to what would otherwise be cold, dark, damp and dreary, winter evenings – and that can help cheer anyone up.

There's another reason I like them. It's specifically because they are *Christmas* lights. Christmas is about remembering and celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ. The prophet Isaiah, who lived about 700 years before Jesus was born, wrote, "The people walking in darkness have



You can:

- e-mail us at: church@oakwood-chapel.org.uk
- visit our website at: <http://www.oakwood-chapel.org.uk/>
- find us on social media
- phone one of our elders:
Martin on 01279 725786
Sam on 07850 083724
- or, of course come along in person

seen a great light... For to us a child is born, to us a son is given." (Isaiah 9:2,6). At the beginning of his gospel, John wrote about Jesus, "The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world." (John 1:9), and Jesus himself said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 8:12). So when I see Christmas trees with their lights on, and all the other Christmas lights, it reminds me that Jesus is the true light of the world.

We don't know what time of year Jesus was born, but since Jesus came to bring light to a dark world, it seems appropriate to celebrate his birth with displays of light at the darkest time of the year. For us in the northern hemisphere, that's the end of December. (Of course, that image doesn't work so well if you live in Australia or New Zealand, or indeed anywhere else in the southern hemisphere, where Christmas comes in the middle of summer!)

What does the Bible mean when it talks about the world being dark, and Jesus being the light of the world?

It's not talking about physical darkness and natural light. But rather, it means that people don't *understand* who God is, and don't live to worship and serve him – they are living in the dark, *spiritually*. And it means that Jesus came to teach us who God is, and to make it possible for us to worship and serve him – he is the spiritual light we need and only he can truly bring us into the light.

If you want to find out more about what it means that Jesus is the light of the world, then come along to our carol service on December 21st, our Christmas morning service, or to any of our Sunday services.

Martin Biddiscombe



Christmas at Oakwood Chapel

Friday 12th December, 6pm
Carol Singing at Alexandra House

Wednesday 17th December, 10am*
Coffee morning, with festive baking

Sunday 21st December, 6.30pm
Candlelit carol service

Thursday 25th December, 10am
Christmas morning service

* Our coffee mornings will be taking a break during January – and will resume on 4th February 2026.

Away in a manger

It's almost 150 years since the well-known Christmas carol, *Away in a manger*, was written. Since then it has become particularly popular in school nativity plays. The first line reminds us that Jesus was born in very humble circumstances, as the gospel writer tells us: "Mary wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." (Luke 2:7).

But what about the line, *The baby awakes, but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes*? I think we can all agree that is highly unlikely! The Bible tells us that Jesus was not only born as a baby, but he grew up 100% human – just like every single one of us. And, as we know, babies cry... The *only* difference was that he never did anything to offend God, or break any of God's laws; that is, he was completely without sin (Hebrews 4:15). And that is why Jesus Christ – and only Jesus Christ – is able to fully, finally and permanently deal with our *sin* (1 John 3:5). Want to know more? Join us at any service, at Christmas, or throughout the year.

Martin Biddiscombe