

Giving, receiving and a very big "Thank You"

At home, the way we do Christmas changes a little bit each year. We often have turkey, but not always – a juicy joint of pork covered in crackling that really crackles is my favourite Christmas Day treat. We always have a tree – Christmas just wouldn't be Christmas for my daughter Lisa if we didn't. One year she even over-rode our decision not to have one by buying it herself. But Christmas pudding is a statutory requirement here - although that particular inedible conglomeration of blackened, un-recognisable, so-called fruit never touches my lips, others seem to like it. Each year however, the way we organise our present giving changes slightly.

We have tried stocking fillers for everyone, young and old, and that has been fun - but this year only our grandchildren will have that thrill. We tried doing the "secret giver" thing, where potential receivers of lovely things are chosen by lot. And that was fine until the gift that I was generously given failed to take off (it was a helicopter) and yes, I looked at everyone else enjoying their perfect presents with just a touch of envy (and yes, I do know that particular shortcoming appears in a well-known biblical list of "Though shalt nots"). This year everybody is giving everyone a gift but we've set an upper price limit.

Many people say "it is better to give than to receive", but I am not sure that is entirely true. I think it is just as lovely to receive as it is to give a thoughtfully chosen gift. Otherwise what would be the point of either thing?

We at The Church in the Woottons have been overwhelmed by your response to our October Gift Day Appeal, to date we have received £5865 and money is still coming in. Thank you very much for your generosity, and for the manner in which so many of you have given – we are very encouraged. Reclaiming gift-aid will add some more and we are really hopeful of reaching our target of £8000

Thank you very much indeed for all your support. "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7)

You will find details of all our Christmas Services in this issue of Contact and I hope you can come along.

May I wish you all a very happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

James