

## HELGA'S EDITORIAL

Luke 2:10 “And the angel said to them, be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.”

Dear Friends,

Another year is ending and it is Christmas time again. We question where the year has gone. When did winter turn to spring and spring turn to summer; summer to autumn and now winter again. Have we enjoyed the seasons? Are we part of the cycle of our year or do we enjoy one season more than another and perhaps hate winter and Christmas.

Because we are humans we are in a constant cycle of change and aging. We are on a journey that leads to everlasting life. The seasons are not the problem; perhaps we retain memories of certain events either good or bad; we may struggle with our temperament, beliefs, standards and personalities by projecting them outward on to circumstances or the people to whom we relate.

Jesus, the Prince of peace, was happy to be born as a baby. He graciously entered our world and humanity. He lived and died to bring salvation and everlasting life. He taught us how to live abundantly; to love people; to serve God and to enjoy the world which He has created for us.

Thank you for praying for UCHM and for gifting time and money. You have enabled us to continue to offer God's love

and healing to many people when most charities have struggled financially and some have closed.

Everyone at UCHM sends you our love and thanks. We pray that this will be a season of rest and peace and that you will be surrounded by the blessing of God and experience the deep love of your family and friends. May you be strengthened and guided as you look toward the New Year. May you have a time of special joy as you holiday and be part of the beautiful world in which we live.

God bless you and keep you,  
Helga



**Quote:** - "A candle loses nothing of its light when lighting another." Kahlil Gibran

# Auction of Hope

Thank you to Jill and all that attended, donated and contributed to the auction in November. It was a fantastic day and raised:

**£7,000**

Giving a grand total of:

**£8256.60**

Raised for the balcony fund.

Thank you to Trevor, Mary and all their dancers for pioneering this exciting adventure.

This means we are now able to commence work on converting the balcony, pictured below, into a large conference room.



# *Christmas Greetings*

*I wish you Christmas greetings, my friend,  
abundant blessings without any end,  
treasures more precious than silver or gold,  
faith that is strong and strength to be bold;  
love, laughter, a heart filled with cheer,  
and a generous spirit to last you all year.*

*Health and happiness wishes I send,  
for loving family, the kindest of friends.  
May starlight guide you along on your way,  
to the Babe, in your heart, asleep on the hay.  
There hope will find you and worry will cease  
as you open His gift, your soul will find peace.*

*Peace of Christ be with you,*

*Author - Linda Gleason  
Taken from [www.skywriting.net](http://www.skywriting.net)*



# **Introduction to Counselling Skills in a Christian Setting — Level Two**

Entry stage for anyone wanting to become a counsellor or  
for people involved in pastoral care work to develop their  
listening skills and gain a basic understanding of counselling  
theory

**TRAINER: Helga Taylor**

**23 and 24 January 2015  
27 and 28 February 2015  
27 and 28 March 2015  
24 and 25 April 2015**

**4 Friday evening all day Saturday weekends  
over 4 months**

**For an information pack please contact us on:**

**Tel: 01484 461098**

**Email: [training@uchm.org](mailto:training@uchm.org)**

# Advanced Diploma in Counselling - Level 4



**Commencing January 2015**

A distinctive, integrative Counsellor Training Programme for Christians and all who wish to work with the Spiritual Dimension of Counselling

A substantial Core Counselling Course with Supervised Placement which may be counted for Accreditation Purposes

**For an information pack please contact us on:**

**Tel: 01484 461098**

**Email: [training@uchm.org](mailto:training@uchm.org)**

# **Upcoming Training -**

**As part of UCHM's Continuing Professional Development  
Training Programme:**

## **Ethical Framework**

**Friday 30th and Saturday 31st January 2015**

**9.00am - 5.30pm**

**Trainer: Reg O'Brien**

## **Working with Depression in Pastoral Care**

**Friday 6th March 6.00pm - 9.30pm  
and Saturday 7th March 2015 9.30am - 4.30pm**

**Trainer: Helga Taylor**

## **Gestalt - An Introduction**

**Tuesday 12th May 2015 1.00pm - 4.30pm**

**Trainer: Carole Smith**

**Look out on our website [www.uchm.org](http://www.uchm.org) as more conferences will  
be added as they are finalised.**

For booking forms or more information please contact the centre on 01484  
461098, email [training@uchm.org](mailto:training@uchm.org), or visit our website - [www.uchm.org](http://www.uchm.org) -  
where booking forms can be downloaded to print out

UCHM is a charity providing accessible counselling services throughout the  
region. Your contribution will be used to sustain the work of the Charity.

## *The Iron Winter and the Raggedy Old Man*

The Russian winter of 1910 was the severest in memory. It was so cold that it was known as the 'Iron Winter'.

Because of its location, a prosperous and popular hotel some twelve miles from Moscow, suffered particular loss of business. No one had stayed there for weeks and the owner had laid off most of his staff.

One evening, he was surprised to hear a knock on his front door. Upon opening it, he was confronted by a grey bearded, raggedy old man. The old man said that he had been out in the snow for several days. He was freezing cold and starving hungry. Could the hotelier give him a meal and a bed for the night?

"I can certainly do that", said the hotelier, "For one night's accommodation plus a meal, the charge is three roubles. Can you pay?" The old man confessed that he had no money, but if he was sent away, he would surely die in the cold.

The hotelier felt sorry for the old man and told him to come inside. He took him to the kitchen where, bubbling away on the stove was a pot of borsch (beetroot soup). The hotelier ladled out a large portion of the borsch, added a twist of sour cream and for good measure, gave his visitor half a loaf of rye bread. The raggedy old man was obviously very hungry and soon disposed of the bread and the soup. The hotelier laughed to see a great beetroot stain along the bottom of the old man's moustache.

The raggedy old man thanked the hotelier for the food and said, "You won't see the going of me in the morning, but although I have no money now, I will pay you the three roubles when I have it". The hotelier said nothing but did not expect to see either the three roubles or the old man ever again.

The snow eventually cleared and business began to pick up. In fact the hotel became busier than it had ever been.

In the spring, being a devoutly religious man, the hotelier decided to go to the great cathedral in the city to give thanks to God for the hotel's recovery and continued success.

Upon arrival in the capital he made straight for the cathedral. Once inside, he gazed around the interior of the ancient church. His eyes fell upon the many icons that adorned the walls. He was drawn in particular to one image in a far corner.

It was painted in the likeness of an old man with a grey beard and seemed vaguely familiar. As he drew closer, he noticed a dark, beetroot like stain upon the moustache. He looked at the name inscribed beneath the image. It read, "Saint Nicholas".

He reached for a candle to place in front of the icon and as he moved the loose earth into which he would fix the candle, his hand touched something small and hard. It was a coin, a rouble. Beside it were two more. He picked them up and looked again at the icon.

The beetroot stain was gone and the face was smiling.



# Prayer Diary

## December

1 <sup>st</sup>	Advanced Counselling Skills Level Three
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Advanced Diploma in Counselling Level Four Year Two Group Supervision UCHM Monthly Worship Time
15 <sup>th</sup>	Advanced Counselling Skills Level Three
16 <sup>th</sup>	UCHM Managers Meeting Advanced Diploma in Counselling Level Four Year Two
17 <sup>th</sup>	Finance and Property Meeting
24 <sup>th</sup> - 4 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2015	UCHM closed for the Christmas holidays

## January

6 <sup>th</sup>	New Advanced Diploma in Counselling Level Four Year One Group Supervision UCHM Monthly Worship Time
7 <sup>th</sup>	UCHM Shop Committee Meeting
8 <sup>th</sup>	Trustees Meeting
12 <sup>th</sup>	Advanced Counselling Skills Level Three
13 <sup>th</sup>	Advanced Diploma in Counselling Level Four Year Two
20 <sup>th</sup>	Advanced Diploma in Counselling Level Four Year One
23 <sup>rd</sup> - 24 <sup>th</sup>	Introduction to Christian Counselling Level Two
26 <sup>th</sup>	Advanced Counselling Skills Level Three
27 <sup>th</sup>	UCHM Managers Meeting Advanced Diploma in Counselling Level Four Year Two
30 <sup>th</sup> - 31 <sup>st</sup>	Ethical Framework Conference

## February

3 <sup>rd</sup>	Advanced Diploma in Counselling Level Four Year One Group Supervision UCHM Monthly Worship Time
9 <sup>th</sup>	Advanced Counselling Skills Level Three
10 <sup>th</sup>	Advanced Diploma in Counselling Level Four Year Two
11 <sup>th</sup>	UCHM Affiliates and Surgeries Training Day at The Life Centre, Bierley, Bradford
24 <sup>th</sup>	UCHM Managers Meeting Advanced Diploma in Counselling Level Four Year One
27 <sup>th</sup> - 28 <sup>th</sup>	Advanced Diploma in Counselling Level Four Year Two Introduction to Christian Counselling Level Two

## **Can You Sponsor a Worker?**

A small monthly donation would enable us to strengthen our admin team here at UCHM and equip us to better serve those in need.

This is at a time when we have a waiting list of people requiring counselling and a need to increase the numbers of students on our courses.

If several people just gave a few pounds a month it would assist us to take on someone to lighten the load on our existing staff and provide a better service.

If you feel you would like to discuss this further then please contact Sandra McSweeney at UCHM on 01484 461098 or email [uchm@uchm.org](mailto:uchm@uchm.org)

Thank you



# UCHM's 2015 Pilgrimage to Israel

## "Joy in the Journey"

Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April – Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2015

Flying Manchester to Tel Aviv



Staying Knights Palace in Old City, Jerusalem & Ma'agan on the shores of Galilee



£1999 – includes flights, half board accommodation, coaches, all entrances and gratuities

For a brochure and a booking form please contact UCHM on 01484 461098 or email [uchm@uchm.org](mailto:uchm@uchm.org)

## FOR THE EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME

To travel around Israel has a profound effect upon one's faith. To be able to gaze at the same hills and valleys which the Lord knew and walked upon; to enjoy the vistas of Lake Galilee and the places whose names we are so familiar with enriches our reading of the Bible. When walking along the streets of the Old City of Jerusalem we are walking in the place where God's relationship with His people has been formed. No-one returns from a pilgrimage like this without our faith being strengthened and encouraged.

We don't stay in busy, modern hotels. We stay in the Knight's Palace Hotel actually inside the Old City Walls of Jerusalem, and in Galilee we stay in Ma'agan, which is literally on the shores of Galilee. Both these places have a lovely atmosphere and the management know us and look after us well.

There are cheaper, shorter, more whistle-stop tours, but we believe that the UCHM Pilgrimage gives a good mix of meditation, teaching, worship and space for personal reflection.

We are aware that this is not a cheap holiday but there are no hidden extras to catch you by surprise. The price covers flights, coach travel inside Israel, all site entrances, half board accommodation and all tips and gratuities. All you need to buy are your lunches! (and souvenirs)

There has been a lot of interest in next year's pilgrimage, so to secure your place please could you send your booking form with the required payment of £1100 (deposit plus interim payment) to UCHM so your flight can be secured immediately. (Saving scheme available if required).

## God's Shepherd — a Christmas Story

The frost of forty winters had etched deep lines into the shepherd's face. Having spent his entire life outdoors on Bethlehem's hills, he was old at forty — and cold. The hillside where he sat this day was cold, too, and he pulled his mantle close about him to block the wind.

Every so often he would shift position, not out of discomfort so much, but from a sense of unease, anxiety, crowdedness. Instead of hundreds of sheep with whom he felt quite at home, this hillside was flocked with people — thousands of them — listening attentively to the Teacher. They could hear him fairly well, except when the wind whisked away his words.

Tobias ben David (pronounced da-VEED) was the shepherd's name, though people called him Toby. His flocks were in good hands this week, cared for by his grown sons, but Toby had left them to listen to Jesus of Nazareth. Today the Teacher was talking about salvation, how God came to save his people from their waywardness and sins, to rescue them and gather them close.

Now Jesus' illustration turned to sheep. Toby felt better. He knew a lot more about sheep than people.

"The good shepherd," Jesus was saying, "lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand who doesn't own the flock runs away when he sees the wolf coming, but not the good shepherd...." One night, years ago, the men Toby had hired to watch the flock with him fled when they saw a mountain lion roaming the hills. But Toby had stayed. Shepherding was his livelihood. He knew the sacrifices that good shepherding required. He knew about defending defenceless

lambs. He knew about putting his life on the line for the sheep. That's what good shepherds did.

Jesus continued, "Suppose you have 100 sheep and when night comes one is missing. What do you do? You leave the 99 sheep all safe together and then climb the hills, looking, searching until you find the lost sheep. Then you pick him up, put him on your shoulders, bring him down the hill to the camp, and ask your fellow shepherds to rejoice with you."

"Your heavenly Father is like that," Jesus said. "When you have lost your way, he will rescue you and save you and never give up on you until he finds you — and you find him."

Toby's heart was racing. He felt a lump in his throat. He understood. *Toby* had combed the hills for lost sheep, not stopping, not quitting. *He* knew the joy of discovery, of rescuing the sheep from a thicket, of bringing it back and celebrating with his friends. He had *been* that kind of shepherd.

But he also knew how it felt to wander off, feeling lost, aimless, trapped. Clueless about where he was and where he was going. Flailing about, struggling to climb out of what seemed like a steep ravine. That's why he came today to hear the Teacher, hoping to regain the faith he had felt as a child, a ten-year-old child.

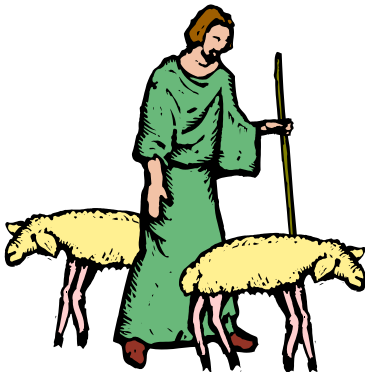
His mind spun back to the evening of his tenth birthday. Like nearly every night, he was out on the hills with his dad or his uncles, caring for the sheep. The stars were brilliant, dancing in the black sky. But suddenly an overpowering bright light flooded the hillside. A voice boomed out, "Behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people. For to you is born this day in the city of

David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord!"

A saviour, a rescuer — shepherds' work. He had often wondered about the boy-child they discovered that night, lying in a manger, just as the angel had said. Toby had knelt down and worshipped the baby who bore the world's destiny upon his tiny shoulders. What had become of him, this baby? By now he must be thirty-something. Had this saviour saved anyone yet? Rescued anyone? Could he rescue me from my aimless existence? Toby wondered.

Just then the wind caught Jesus' words and blew them Toby's direction. "I am the Good Shepherd," Jesus was saying, "who lays down his life for the sheep. Come to me, all you who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me," he said with warmth and joy full on his face, "for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

I wonder? thought Toby as he felt big tears begin to roll down his cheeks and into his beard. I wonder? thought Toby as joy and the certainty of God's love began to fill his heart until it seemed like he would explode. I wonder? thought Toby, if this Jesus is the little baby I saw that night, the Saviour of the world? Yes, thought Toby, he must be. His words found me and, frankly, he sounds just like he's ... God's shepherd.



by Dr. Ralph F. Wilson  
Taken from [www.joyfulheart.com](http://www.joyfulheart.com)

## A Wish From Above

The little angel felt happy, as a young girl held her in the palm of her hand. But the moment she let go the little angel felt quite sad.

"Please come back," pleaded the little angel. But the young girl didn't hear her.

The little angel tried to follow the young girl, but her wings wouldn't budge. She was stuck. And no matter how hard she tried, she couldn't free herself.

Her plea for help didn't go unanswered, however, as a gruff voice said, "Can I be of assistance, madam?"

Although she heard the voice call out, the little angel didn't see anyone.

"Who said that?" asked the little angel.

"I did," said a large polar bear.

"I hear you, kind sir. But I can't see you."

"I can't see you either," said the polar bear. "Where are you?"

"I'm not sure. All I see is a big wall. And to make matters worse, I'm stuck."

"A big wall is all that I see, too," said the polar bear. "And I am also stuck. This is most peculiar."

As she struggled to break free, the little angel hoped that everything happening was just a dream. But when she opened her eyes the next morning, the wall was still all she could see.

"Are you still there?" called out the little angel to the polar bear.

"Yes, and still stuck."

"Me too," she said in a sad voice.

But the little angel's sadness soon faded, when the young girl was standing beside her once more. The little angel thought that the young girl had come back for her, but she had not.



Suddenly everything around the little angel started to shake, and then the young girl was gone. The little angel asked the polar bear if he had also felt the great tremble, but he had something else on his mind. He asked her if she too smelled something wonderful.

"Yes," said the little angel. "But how can you think of food right now?"

And then a voice said, "Hello, I'm a gingerbread man."

The little angel and polar bear could hear the gingerbread man, but they couldn't see him. The gingerbread man told them he was stuck and couldn't move. But unlike the little angel and polar bear, the gingerbread man was facing a window; and through it he could see snowflakes falling outside.

"How do you get to see such things? All we can see is a big wall," said the polar bear.

"I don't know," said the gingerbread man, "but it sure is lovely."

The little angel's eyes filled with tears. She thought that she would never be able to see such things herself. And then the young girl came back yet again, but this time she plugged something into the big wall. Suddenly beautiful lights flashed in all directions!

The young girl then placed a candy cane right above a little angel, and right below a polar bear.

"What do you think, Mommy?"

"I think it's the most beautiful Christmas tree ever," said the young girl's mother.

"Now there's only one last thing to do," said her father.

The young girl's father proceeded to place a gold star atop the Christmas tree, but before doing so, he asked everyone in the room to make a wish. And everyone did. Later that night the gingerbread man ran away as fast as he could - the polar bear was outside playing in the snow - and the little angel was in the young girl's room watching over her.



Taken from <http://www.theholidayspot.com>

## **16 Ways to Confuse Santa**

1. Instead of milk and cookies, leave him a salad, and a note explaining that you think he could stand to lose a few pounds.
2. While he's in the house, go find his sleigh and write him a speeding ticket.
3. Leave him a note, explaining that you've gone away for the holidays. Ask if he would mind watering your plants.
4. While he's in the house, replace all his reindeer with exact replicas. Then wait and see what happens when he tries to get them to fly.
5. Keep an angry bull in your living room. If you think a bull goes crazy when he sees a little red cape, wait until he sees that big, red Santa suit!
6. Build an army of mean-looking snowmen on the roof, holding signs that say "We hate Christmas," and "Go away Santa"
7. Leave a note by the telephone, telling Santa that Mrs. Claus called and wanted to remind him to pick up some milk and a loaf of bread on his way home.
8. While he's in the house, find the sleigh and sit in it. As soon as he comes back and sees you, tell him that he shouldn't have missed that last payment, and take off.
9. Leave a plate filled with cookies and a glass of milk out, with a note that says, "For The Tooth Fairy."
10. Take everything out of your house as if it's just been robbed. When Santa arrives, show up dressed like a policeman and say, "Well, well. They always return to the scene of the crime."

11. Leave out a copy of your Christmas list with last-minute changes and corrections.
12. While he's in the house, cover up the top of the chimney.
13. Leave Santa a note, explaining that you've moved. Include a map with unclear and hard-to-read directions to your new house.
14. Leave out a Santa suit, with a dry-cleaning bill.
15. Paint "hoof-prints" all over your face and clothes. While he's in the house, go out on the roof. When he comes back up, act like you've been "trampled." Threaten to sue.
16. Instead of ornaments, decorate your tree with Easter eggs. Dress up like the Easter Bunny . Wait for Santa to come and then say, "This neighbourhood ain't big enough for the both of us."



# UCHM News

- **Team News**

We say goodbye to Sandra Conaghan who moved at the end of October and ended her role as Training Coordinator. Maggie Pereira has taken on the training admin, and Helga will be training the Level 3 and 4 courses with Val Haigh and Julia Hyliger respectively. We also say goodbye to Sandra Cromack who has ended her time as a volunteer Training Admin Worker. We thank them both for what they have done and wish them well for the future.

We have several new placement trainee counsellors who will be starting soon. They are Jessica Atkinson, Dorota Barron, Nicci Chaplin, Cheryl James, Catherine Jones, Nicky Hall, Rachel Bell, Beverley Thomas and Rosie Dempsey.

- **LinkedIn**

We now have a presence on LinkedIn, to promote the work of UCHM. If you are on LinkedIn please help us spread the word by following us on <https://www.linkedin.com/company/united-churches-healing-ministry> and sharing with your connections.



# **The Month After Christmas**

Twas the month after Christmas, and all through the house  
Nothing would fit me, not even a blouse.  
The cookies I'd nibbled, the eggnog I would taste  
At the holiday parties had gone to my waist.

When I got on the scales there arose such a number!  
When I walked to the store it was less a walk than a lumber.  
I remembered the marvellous meals I'd prepared;  
The gravies and sauces and beef nicely rare.

The wine and the rum balls, the bread and the cheese  
And the way I'd never said, "None for me, please."  
As I dressed myself in my husband's old shirt  
And prepared once again to do battle with dirt.

I said to myself, as only I can  
"You can't spend another winter disguised as a man!"  
So -- away with the last of the sour cream dip,  
Get rid of the fruit cake, every cracker and chip.

Every last bit of food that I like must be banished  
Till all the additional ounces have vanished.  
I won't have a cookie -- not even a lick.  
I'll chew only on long celery sticks.

I won't have hot biscuits, or corn bread, or pie,  
I'll munch on a carrot and quietly cry.  
I'm hungry, I'm lonesome, and life is a bore  
But isn't that what January is for?

Unable to giggle, life's no longer a riot.  
Happy New Year to all and to all a good diet!

Author unknown - taken from <http://www.skywriting.net>

## Yarn of the Seat in the Stand

Freddie and John were fortunate enough to have a season ticket to watch Chelsea. They could not help noticing that there was always a spare seat (B20) next to them and they had a friend who would love to buy a season ticket, especially if all three could have seats together.

One half-time Freddie went to the ticket office and asked if they could buy the season ticket for B20. The official said that unfortunately the ticket had been sold. Nevertheless, week after week the seat was still empty.

Then on Boxing day, much to Freddie and John's amazement the seat was taken for the first time that season. John could not resist asking the newcomer, 'Where have you been all season'? 'Don't ask' he said, 'the wife bought the season ticket back last summer, and kept it for a surprise Christmas present!'



## *Christ Is The Light Of Christmas*

Christmas joy and lights aglow;  
Christmas songs to warm and cheer  
Excitement is on the children's faces  
As anticipation fills the air —

But for some, it can be lonely  
When loved ones have passed away,  
Memories are all that linger  
As the years begin to fade

But Christ's light should never dim;  
It should ever shine out bright  
Our ray of hope in this troubled world  
Is our joy of eternal light

Christmas, when spent with Jesus,  
Can warm our hurting hearts,  
For as His light shines within us,  
Its glow warms our deepest parts.

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