



*Action for
Children*

A close-up photograph of a Christmas tree branch with green needles, warm white lights, and a gold ornament. The text "The gift of joy" is overlaid in a white, cursive font.

The
gift
of joy



As we look ahead to Christmas, our theme is 'The gift of joy', recalling the angel's words heralding the birth of Jesus to the shepherds, and the great joy brought to all by his birth.

Poem

Joy is surprise,
an angel in the night
when you are scared.

Joy is gift,
wrapped with care under the tree
from a stranger who knows you to be good.

Joy is what happens
when you find you're not alone
on the dark hillside of your questions.

Joy is the alleluia of a moonlit sky
revealing the unexpected baby
to be the most important one on earth
and heaven too.

Joy is the star to follow
in the company of love

Joy is gold found
cradled in a stable like a king.

Poem by the Revd Barbara Glasson, former President of the Methodist Conference.



For vulnerable children across the UK,
Christmas is anything but magical.

We're there when families can't afford the basics. We top up the gas meter when the house feels cold. Put food on the table so no one in the house goes hungry. Buy a Christmas present when a parent can't.

We're a vital lifeline for desperate families with nowhere to turn.





“ If it wasn't for the work Action for Children have done with me, I do not believe I'd be the person that I am now. ”

Emily

**This story has been made anonymous.*

Prayer

God of love,
We pray for all who feel afraid today
Who struggle to find joy in the midst of uncertainty about what
the future holds
We pray for families who are struggling this Christmas
For young people who do not know which way to turn
Loving God, bring your peace, and your joy

God of peace
We pray for all who feel exhausted today
Who are finding the pressures of family life overwhelming
For carers and foster parents who long for respite
For all who work tirelessly for Action for Children, particularly those
on the frontline,
Peaceful God, bring your rest and your calm

God of justice
We pray for all who feel trapped by systems which prevent flourishing
For young people trapped in criminal exploitation
For all who have power to change policy for good, that they may
use that power well.
Justice seeking God, bring transformation

God of all
We pray for all children and young people
In our community, in our church
For those known to us
Show us ways to work safely and well with others
To offer spaces for joy in this challenging world
Amen.

A prayer by Deacon Kerry Scarlett, Vice-President of the Methodist Conference, 2023-2024

 **Be a**
Secret
Santa
for a vulnerable child



Deck your halls

Come together as a family, school or congregation this Christmas, and decorate your own Action for Children bauble. By sharing our vision, you could help more vulnerable children feel the magic of Christmas.

**Safe
and
happy
childhood**