

# Equality and Diversity Newsletter



December 2009

## Editor's Introduction

Welcome to the Learning World Equality and Diversity Newsletter. The newsletter aims to communicate with all our teams on important topics and to make sure that everyone is kept fully up to date with new legislation and our policies and practices.



Learning World is an equal opportunities training provider and welcomes applications from females and minority groups working in the industry.

## Christmas Cultural Festival

Christmas commemorates the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. Christians and non-Christians celebrate Christmas throughout the world and it has become a popular cultural festival. In Greek, the first letter of Christmas is an 'X', and 'Xmas' is often used as an abbreviation of Christmas.

- The Nativity** - The belief that the Messiah was born to Mary in Bethlehem. The birth fulfils prophecies from the Old Testament when the prophet Micah said, "But you Bethlehem, though you are small, out of you will come for me, one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times". The prophet Isaiah wrote, "He will be called, 'Wonderful Counsellor', 'Mighty God', 'Eternal Father', 'Prince of Peace'." This suggests that the birth of Jesus was prophesised hundreds of years before the birth of Jesus of Nazareth.
- King Herod the Great** - A ruthless tyrant who slaughtered members of his own family in order to secure his position. He ordered the massacre of all children under two years in Bethlehem, when he received news of the birth of a great king.



Many people believe that the birth of Jesus fulfils prophecies from the Old Testament. The Christmas story can be found in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke chapters 1 and 2.

### The Traditional Colours of Christmas

#### Miracle Plays:

In the 1300s local churches often presented miracle plays as a learning tool for people who were illiterate. The Paradise Play about Adam and Eve was often performed on Christmas Eve, and props were used (a pine tree with red apples tied to its branches) to help demonstrate the story. The official colours of Christmas became green (tree) and red (apples).

#### Hope and Blood:

A green coloured tree is said to represent the hope of Jesus, which remains alive throughout the year.

The red coloured apples are said to represent the blood shed for all human beings in order that they might be saved.



## Seasons Greetings



Seisoene Groet

າគိຣພຈນ໌ຄູດູກາລ

مواسم التحيات

Nadolig Llawen

季节问候

Julhälsningar

Meilleurs Yœux

Aastaaegade Tervitused

मौसम अभिवादन

Sezona Čestitke

Beannachtaí Séasúir

Karácsonyi Üdvözlet



Salutări de Anotimpuri

Stagioni Saluti

Сезона Ноздрав

季節の挨拶



## The Multi-Faith Festival Year – December to January

**December 10**

**International Human Rights Day:** The United Nations proclaimed this international day in 1948 to protect the human rights of individuals, which was a result of the horrific experiences of The Second World War.



**January 3**

**Vasant Panchami:** Hindu - a festival dedicated to the goddess of learning. The colour yellow is of special importance on this day, signifying prosperity and also love.



**December 12**

**Jewish:** Hanukkah - known as the Festival of Lights, this eight day holiday goes back 2,400 years and is celebrated by lighting one candle on the Hanukia (eight stemmed candelabrum).



**January 5**

**Twelfth Night:** Christian - a festival to mark the end of the Twelve Days of Christmas and the coming of the Epiphany (which takes on a similar significance as Christmas Eve).



## Christianity

Christianity has divided into a number of denominations since it was founded (circa 33 AD). Each denomination has its own practices and beliefs, and the four main branches of Christianity are Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant and Anglican.



**Seventh-Day Adventists:** Strictly observe the Sabbath on a Saturday and believe in the second coming of Jesus.



**Presbyterian:** Reformed churches and Presbyterians believe in the teachings of John Calvin (also known as Calvinism), which is based upon the rule or sovereignty of God.



**Lutheran:** One of the largest denominations in the world and is based upon the teachings of Martin Luther, a 16th Century reformer. He proclaimed that salvation is received by faith in Jesus Christ.



**Baptist:** Commitment to faith is performed by baptism (immersion) and the Baptist Church is the largest Free Church in existence - (soul freedom, church freedom, bible freedom and religious freedom).



**Amish:** Known for their rejection of the modern world, they are also members of the Anabaptist Church.



**Anglican:** A denomination which is dedicated to the journey of faith and fellowship.



**Eastern Orthodox:** The Orthodox Church is split into regions, but is predominantly located in the former Byzantine Empire - the areas of Greece, Turkey and Russia.



**Roman Catholic:** The world's largest Christian Church, which believes it is continuing the Christian community originally founded by Jesus Christ.



**Protestants:** Protestantism is a branch within Christianity, where most of the denominations have developed during the 500 years since the Protestant Reformation. Examples of denominations within Protestantism include: Lutheranism, Calvinism, Methodism, Baptist Churches and the Seventh-Day Adventist Church.

### Useful Websites:

**Timeline of Christianity** - [www.religionfacts.com/christianity/timeline.htm](http://www.religionfacts.com/christianity/timeline.htm)  
**Christmas Traditions Around the World** - [www.soon.org.uk/country/christmas.htm](http://www.soon.org.uk/country/christmas.htm)

**The Seven Deadly Sins:** Pride, Greed, Lust, Envy, Gluttony, Anger, Sloth  
**Belief:** One God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit)  
**Purpose:** To Love, know and serve God  
**Afterlife:** Resurrection of the body and soul and a belief in heaven and hell

# Human Rights

## Human Rights

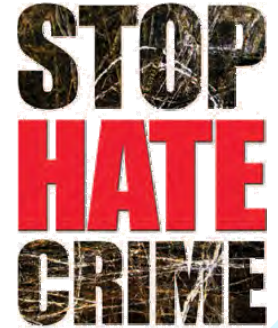
The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) set out their strategy on 10 October 2009, to ensure that areas of accountability are strengthened within the UK Government and the United Nations on human rights issues. These organisations will be measured on their performance on human rights, specifically relating to torture, race discrimination and disability rights. For more information about human rights go to [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

## Mental Health

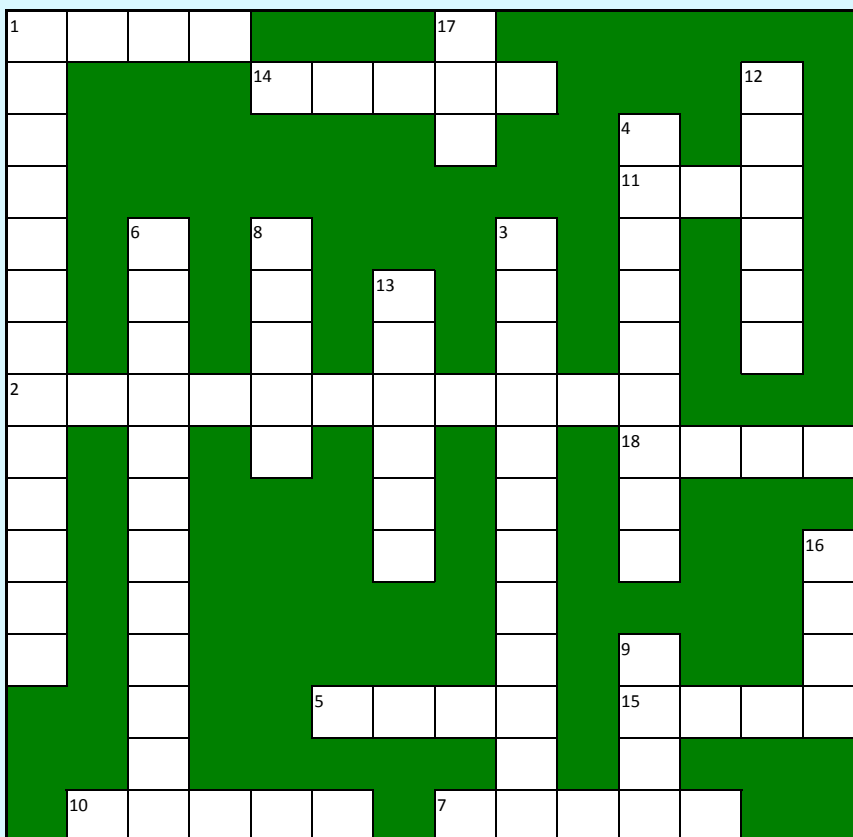
A national campaign was launched in October 2009 by Stop Hate Crime UK to raise awareness of protecting people with mental health problems. Hate crime affects 3 out of 4 people who experience mental health issues, many of which generally go unreported.

*"People often aren't aware that they have experienced a Hate Crime or that they can report it. This campaign is to inform and encourage people to report such incidents."*

- Rose Simkins, Chief Executive, Stop Hate UK.



## Christmas Crossword



### Down

1. Known for his generous gifts to the poor.
3. King William I of England was crowned on this day in 1066.
4. Jesus was born here.
6. A resin that burns with a beautiful smell.
8. The giving of these comes from the Bible's account of the wise men visiting Jesus.
9. The wise men followed this.
12. The Queen's Christmas \_\_\_\_\_ was televised for the first time in 1957.
13. The popular Christmas song '\_\_\_\_\_ Bells' was composed in 1857 and was originally written for Thanksgiving.
16. The North \_\_\_\_\_
17. Rudolph the \_\_\_\_\_ Nosed Reindeer.

### Across

1. 'Hark the Herald Angels \_\_\_\_\_
2. Roman emperor who began the celebration of Christmas on the 25 December 325 AD.
5. In 1843 the Christmas \_\_\_\_\_ was produced by Sir Henry Cole.
7. Plant oil with a very strong sweet smell.
10. According to meteorological records there have only been \_\_\_\_\_ white Christmases.
11. An old wives' tales says that bread baked on Christmas \_\_\_\_\_ will never go mouldy.
14. The name of a reindeer.
15. Thomas Edison's assistant invented Christmas \_\_\_\_\_ lights in 1882.
18. Three French \_\_\_\_\_

**Answers to the Christmas Crossword can be found on the**

Z: Drive / Quality Improvement / Equality and Diversity / Equality and Diversity Newsletter / E&D Quizzes & Puzzles / Christmas Crossword

Alternatively send an email to [fgeorge@constructionlearningworld.com](mailto:fgeorge@constructionlearningworld.com) to receive the answers.

# Christmas Competition

1. The first documented use of an evergreen tree in Christmas celebrations was in:

**A:** 1510      **B:** 1610      **C:** 1710

2. Pagans celebrate the winter solstice, which is known as:

**A:** Isis      **B:** Yule      **C:** Ostara



3. Mistletoe is:

**A:** A sacred plant relating to fertility.    **B:** Food for the gods.    **C:** 'Celyn' in Welsh.

4. The custom of sending Christmas cards started in Britain in:

**A:** 1740      **B:** 1780      **C:** 1840

5. Father Christmas or Santa Claus is based on a real person who is:

**A:** A Turkish Christian leader who gave money to the poor.  
**B:** A Mexican priest who gave presents to children.  
**C:** A charitable Eskimo who lived at the North Pole.

**Win a tin of Quality Street!**

Answers available from 9th December from

*Z: drive/Quality Improvements/equality and diversity/E&D Newsletter/E&DQuizzes*

6. The name Santa Claus originates from:

**A:** The German 'Weihnachtsman'  
**B:** The Dutch 'Sinkterlaas'  
**C:** The French 'Le Père Noel'

7. Boxing Day comes from:

**A:** The banning of all boxing matches on this day.  
**B:** The Victorian tradition of wrapping gifts in boxes.  
**C:** Churches opening their alms boxes and giving money to the poor



8. In Russia, Father Christmas is known as:

**A:** Father Frost      **B:** Father Snowy      **C:** Father Ice



Please hand/post entry form to the Quality Team, Aspect House.  
 All correct answers will be put into a hat and drawn at 3pm on 8<sup>th</sup> December.

Your Name:			<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>		<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
	Tick Boxes opposite with your answers	Q1.				Q5.			
	You may photocopy this page.	Q2.				Q6.			
Your Department:		Q3.				Q7.			
		Q4.				Q8.			

## Oxfam: 10 Shocking Facts

Human action creates most of the global poverty.  
 Why not check out the top 10 shocking facts?

<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/fp2p/facts.html>

## Test your knowledge about Christianity

Do you know your religious trivia?

<http://www.squidoo.com/quiz-christianity>