**For immediate release**

**Ten winners announced in Songs of Praise Christmas Card Competition**

*Earlier this year, the BBC One flagship religious programme Songs of Praise launched a Christmas Card competition to find ten winning designs that will be sold to raise money for BBC Children in Need.*

Songs of Praise have announced the ten winning entries from its first ever Christmas Card Competition, in aid of BBC Children in Need.

Budding artists from all across the UK submitted designs after the competition launched earlier this year on Songs of Praise.

The competition invited amateur artists to dig out their pencils and paintbrushes, and create artwork that would capture the spirit of Christmas whilst artistically reflecting what Christmas means to them. An eclectic mix of designs was received, with hundreds of entrants of all ages from all corners of the UK capturing Christmas in a variety of different styles.

The final ten winning designs were chosen by a panel of judges and will form a pack of Christmas cards which will be sold aid of BBC Children in Need over the festive season. The judging panel was made up of actress and accomplished water-colourist Una Stubbs, who stars in BBC One’s Sherlock; the BBC’s Arts Editor, Will Gompertz; and Songs of Praise’s very own presenter and art enthusiast, Josie d’Arby.

**BBC Arts Editor Will Gompertz** commented on the high standard of entries, saying: “This competition has been a fantastic experience; the standard of entries was incredibly high, the variety so wide and the messages so sincere. I do think we’ve curated an amazing pack of Christmas Cards which will go on to raise money for BBC Children in Need, and make a difference to the lives of disadvantaged children and young people across the UK.”

**Actress Una Stubbs** believes that Christmas Cards are one of the best things about Christmas, Una commented on the competition, saying: “With Christmas Cards I really enjoy naïve art, and I think children’s Christmas cards are lovely hand made. I’ve really, really enjoyed judging the competition, I love looking at art and I think there was some really wonderful art in this competition. Better than I ever imagined.  I hope the cards go on to help make a difference to young lives."

Songs of Praise have been supporting BBC Children in Need for over 20 years, broadcasting BBC Children in Need specials and appeal films to their audiences, but this is the first time that they have run a fundraising activity for the Charity.

**Songs of Praise Series Producer, Matthew Napier** said: “Songs of Praise and a Christmas card competition in aid of BBC Children in Need seemed like a match made in heaven and I’m delighted that so many people, young and old, produced such wonderful designs capturing the spirit of Christmas – thank you. “

**Director of Editorial at BBC Children in Need, Gareth Hydes** said: “We’re thrilled with the response we’ve had to the competition from people all across the UK, and we would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who took part!  The proceeds from these cards will go on to make a real difference to the lives of disadvantaged children and young people in communities across the UK.”

The ten winning designs will be on sale from Thursday 1st September and will be available to buy from bbc.co.uk/pudsey

**~Ends~**

**Notes to Editors:**

**The ten winners of Songs of Praise’s Christmas Card Competition in aid of BBC Children in Need are:**

Paul Cookson, from London
Tina Kelham, from Mablethorpe, Lincolnshire
Orla Jackson, from London
Kenneth Bolton, from Faversham, Kent
Denise Kinsey, from Bradford
John Williams, from Wolverhampton
Sarah Power, from Sheffield
Madeline Hawes, from Wokingham
Nieve, aged 12, from Mossley, near Manchester
Deri, aged 9, from Powys

**BBC Children in Need**BBC Children in Need’s vision is that every child in the UK has a safe, happy and secure childhood and the chance to reach their potential.  We will realise this vision by supporting, promoting and publicising work that addresses the challenges that children and young people face and work that builds their skills and resilience.

The Charity is currently supporting 2,400 projects in communities across the UK that are helping children facing a range of disadvantages for example, poverty and deprivation; children who have been the victims of abuse or neglect or disabled young people.