

**THE METHODIST CHURCH
WEST BRIDGFORD**



VOICE

December 2011

Newsletter Issue 44

www.wbmethodist.org.uk

CHRISTMAS AT

WEST BRIDGFORD METHODIST CHURCH



ADVENT SUNDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2011: WAITING MEANS...HOPING

- 10.30 a.m. United Churches Advent Celebration
6.30 p.m. Candlelight Advent Praise led by our Minister

SUNDAY 4 DECEMBER 2011: WAITING MEANS...PREPARING

- 10.30 a.m. Advent Holy Communion led by our Minister
3 p.m. Faith & Light Worship

SUNDAY 11 DECEMBER 2011: WAITING MEANS...LISTENING

- 10.30 a.m. Advent Worship led by Monica (Heard)
5.30 p.m. Readings and Songs for Christmas –
Contemporary Worship led by our Minister

SUNDAY 18 DECEMBER 2011: WAITING MEANS...GIVING

- 10.30 a.m. Nativity Service led by our Minister
5.30 p.m. 'Journey of the Magi' by the Springs Dance Company

Tickets £8 (under 12's £6). Tel: 0115 923 4297

CHRISTMAS EVE: SATURDAY 24 DECEMBER 2011: WAITING...WITH BATED BREATH

- 4 p.m. Family Christingle Service led by our Minister
(Christingles provided)

CHRISTMAS DAY: SUNDAY 25 DECEMBER 2011 WAITING...OVER!

- 10.30 a.m. Christmas Family Worship led by our Minister

Please bring one of your presents along to show members of the congregation



START THE NEW YEAR WITH US...IN WORSHIP

NEW YEAR'S DAY: SUNDAY 1 JANUARY 2012

2.30 p.m. Covenant Service led by our Minister

(not 10.30 a.m.) As a church, at the beginning of a New Year, we respond to God's readiness to love us by promising to be his people.

3 p.m. Faith and Light Group

WORSHIP AT WEST BRIDGFORD METHODIST CHURCH

Sunday Service at 10.30 a.m. (with Sunday Club and Youth+)

Also,

1st Sunday in the month:

3 p.m. Faith and Light Group

2nd Sunday in the month:

4 p.m. Fun Zone (games/activities for families)

5 p.m. Tea and Toast

5.30 p.m. Links (Contemporary Worship)

3rd Sunday in the month

3 p.m. Service of Holy Communion

4th Sunday in the month

4 p.m. Love-out-Loud Teatime Praise for families

LIGHT OF THE WORLD - JESUS - PRINCE OF PEACE

Superintendent Methodist Minister

From: Revd Dr Paul Hill

01159233291

revddrpaulhill@gmail.com

Dear All

In the last edition of 'Voice' (September 2011), I began my letter by telling you how I was surrounded by packing boxes as we were preparing to move from Mansfield to West Bridgford. As Joan, Richard and I continue to settle into our new home, I confess that there are still one or two packing boxes left unopened, but these last few months have been very enjoyable. We are making many new friends and we thank you for the welcome, love and kindness you have shown to us. When a minister leaves and another one arrives it is, of course, a period of transition and change for all of us!

You may recall that in my previous letter I mentioned four things I had encouraged in Mansfield that I was now commending to you by way of a challenge. How are we rising to this challenge so far?

Practice hospitality and welcome people – whoever they are.

Monica Heard (Pastoral Co-ordinator) and I have been working hard to make sure our church has a pastoral list of members and friends that is up-to-date. Pastoral Visitors were re-commissioned during Sunday worship in September and properly acknowledged for the important caring role they play in the life of our church. I am grateful also for the recent efforts of Monica, our Family Workers (Martin and Lynda Blyth, Andy Harris, Dee Simpson and Karen Middleton) and others, contacting young families and encouraging them further into the life of our church.

Work hard to provide worship that is relevant to all people and reveals Jesus to them.

I have enjoyed attending and leading special services, such as Faith and Light, Links, the Harvest Festival and the Remembrance Sunday service, as well as the evening Holy Communion services. On All Saints Day (1 November) we held a service for those who are bereaved and I know how helpful people found the service. Our 'Child in the Church Consultation' in October attracted 45 children and adults to consider the place of families in the life of our church. It is difficult to summarise all the views that were expressed, but in general, our children and young people told us that they are seeking Fun (so worship and activities need to be engaging and relevant), Friendship (as they want to be with other children) and Faith (that aims to inform and shape their life experiences).

Remember, we are inextricably linked – connected to one another.

Our recent, excellent weekend away to Willersley was a timely reminder that we are linked to our friends in the other churches of our Methodist Circuit. Meeting together certainly helped to illuminate the theme of our weekend: Where is God at work in the world?

Furthermore, it seems that West Bridgford Methodist Church has a large extended family. Along with attending many of our own church groups, it has been very rewarding to visit, or at least say 'Hello,' to some of the people that come into our church premises for a variety of activities and to

numerous clubs such as the uniformed groups and the Saturday Community Coffee Morning. Our church community is enriched by their presence – which leads me to my last point.

Always have mission in mind.

I am really looking forward to the Christmas Tree Festival and our Advent and Christmas services. The next few weeks will give us plenty of opportunities to make people welcome, provide worship that is relevant and strengthen our links with our friends. However, we would be failing our challenge is we do not have mission in mind – sensitively making Jesus known in words and actions.

A few weeks ago, I found a slip of paper tucked into book with some words written on it: Lord God, give us a vision of a world as your love could make it. Amen

As Christmas approaches, we shall once again become mindful that God did just that when Jesus entered the world to be the friend and Saviour of all. As a church, we are very fortunate to have such a wonderful extended family. People come, young and old, with all their joys and concerns and not only children and young people are seeking Fun, Friendship and Faith...and we can help! As disciples, followers of Jesus, his love, caring and self-sacrifice is our example and goal. So let me offer to you a theme for our church life in 2012:

Being Disciples – Making disciples

or simply...

Being Friends of Jesus – Making Friends of Jesus

We need to rise to the challenge...all of us...together.

Paull

Revd Dr Paul Hill



TOO FAR

I did want to go to Bethlehem Town
I did want to hurry up hill and down
I did want to follow the pilgrim way
And kneel by the manger on Christmas's day
I did want to look on the Christ child's face
And adore in the circle of His Grace
I did want to look at the Mother-One
As she gently cradled her little son
I did want to see father Joseph's care
As he tended the little family there,

And I wanted to go with desire beyond telling
An unutterable longing kept upwelling
Yet.....

I did go to Bethlehem on Christmas day
I found the place not far away!
I hastened along a West Bridgford street
Companioned by others with eager feet
No grass on the ground, but stars lit the sky,
We came not to a stable but a building high –
A church that was stone and worn and grey
But light streamed from it on our way
Within, no straw on the ground, no sweet smelling hay,
No babe, King of Kings in a manger lay-
Yet this was His home-place – I knew Christ was there
His heavenly harmony was everywhere,
I saw motherly love on each woman's face
And on men a fatherly protecting grace
In the heart of each one a manger stood
And their lips told of tidings good
I knelt, not in a stable with shepherd and lamb
For the manger for me was where I am

So you too have no need to travel afar
For Jesus the Saviour is where you are

Ursula Sendall



Christmas Tree Festival and Christmas Fair

Saturday 26th & Sunday 27th November

The Christmas Fir Tree became associated with Christianity when Saint Boniface, a monk from Derbyshire, went to preach in an area of Germany that became famous for its Christmas decorations.

The triangular shape of the tree was used to explain the concept of the trinity, the continuous green represented the everlasting hope of mankind and its shape signified thoughts toward heaven.

Decorated trees gained vogue in Britain when Queen Victoria and Prince Albert were pictured with their children around one in the Illustrated London News



Tuesday 13th December – Concert for Framework 7.30pm

By Sinfonia Chorale - £7.50pm

A Candlelit Christmas presented by Music for Everyone

Saturday 17th December

at the Methodist Church, West Bridgford, Muster Road
East Midlands Youth String Orchestra and Nottingham Youth Voices
Conductors Richard Howarth and Joe Shaw
Tickets £6.00 (Children £3.00) Phone 0115 959 6484

‘Journey of the Magi’ – by the Springs Christian Dance company – West Bridgford -

Sunday 18th December – 5.30pm

Inspired by TS Eliot’s poem, **Journey of the Magi** is a sparkling production of dance, theatre, song and poetry – entertaining, powerful and compelling, witty and poignant. Audiences reflect on not only the famous journey the wise men made following the star to Jesus, but also the ‘journey’ each of us makes every year in preparing for Christmas Day. The show entertains but also provokes consideration for change. **Journey of the Magi** is enjoyed by children and adults alike; theatregoers, dancers, and anyone who enjoys the performing arts or the Christmas story will love it.

“Forget The Nutcracker, Springs Dance Company’s Journey of the Magi is the best Christmas show I have ever seen! I went along to see it one dark, wet and dismal night in Birmingham and I came out having been touched, amused and moved to tears. The Journey of the Magi looks beyond the tinsel and trappings and reveals the real meaning of Christmas.” David Bintley CBE, Artistic Director, Birmingham Royal Ballet.

Tickets £8.00 (under 12’s £6.00) are available from John & Margaret Thurston (9234297) and John and Monica Heard (9811773). Bring your friends!

Morning Coffee and Toast prior to worship (watch out for details)

The Community Coffee mornings – Saturday mornings 10am to 12 noon have been well attended since September and various charities and local groups have benefited from the proceeds.

10th September	Ruddington Museum	(Cathy Powis) - £130
17th September	Macedonia	(Ann Latham) - £378
24th September	Bangalore	(Ann Miller) - £200
1st October	Cot Death Research	(Audrey+Steve Nicholson) - £120
8th October	Church Funds	(Margaret+John Thurston)
15th October	Church Funds	(Janine+Charles Rainer) - £85
22nd October	Church Funds	(Audrey+Steve Nicholson) - £105
5th November	Save The Children	(Sally Nicholson-Cole) - £395
12th November	Church Funds	(Thurstons+Nicholsons) - £110

A donation of £15 is made to the church after each Community Coffee Morning as a contribution towards running costs.

Details of future Community Coffee Mornings:

3rd Dec ember	Cancer Research	(Heidi Bridmead)
10th December	Church Funds	(Monica+John Heard)
17th December	Cancer Research	(Heidi Bridmead)
7th January	Homeless in Nottingham	(Audrey Nicholson)
14th January	Ladies Network Group	(Vera Barnwell)
21st January	Faith and Light	(Jo Collingwood+Audrey Nicholson)
28th January	Notts gymnastics Academy	(Rebecca Nicholson+Emma)

If anyone would like to book a coffee morning please contact Audrey and Steve Nicholson (0115 9231835)

Visit by Vice President of the Methodist Conference – 5th February 2012

Ruth Pickles will lead worship with our own minister following her work with families on the previous Saturday to prepare for worship

The Mahjong and Games Group meets on the first Saturday of each month from 7-9pm in the Church Hall. Please join us for an evening of fellowship and relaxation and bring along your favourite game.

Future dates are: 3 December, 7 January, 4 February, 3 March, 7 April. *Marcia Siefken*

The Saturday Day Church Café meets on the third Saturday of the month from 2.30-4.30pm in the Church Hall. You are warmly invited to join this new and expanding group. We enjoy a chat over tea and cakes, and for those addicted there is the chance to test their jigsaw skills. Future dates are: 17 December, 21 January, 18 February, 17 March, 21 April.

Marcia and Hinrich Siefken

Tuesday Group. The Ladies Tuesday Group meets on the first Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm in Room 4 and extends a warm welcome to any ladies who would like to attend any individual meeting.

The forthcoming meetings are:

2011. Dec 5 Christmas Miscellany

2012 Jan 3 My time as mayoress - Mrs D McGowan

2012 Feb 7 The Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire Air Ambulance Service

This is our charity of the year and is an OPEN MEETING. Please come and hear more of the valuable work of the Service.

On Saturday March 3 the Tuesday Group will host the Community Coffee Morning to raise funds for the Service, which relies entirely on charitable donations. *Marcia Siefken, 9811617*

The Children of Honduras Trust (www.chtrust.org.uk)

The Tuesday Group has received a letter from the trust thanking the church for its support in the past year. We will again support the Trust in practical ways. Post-Christmas a box will be placed in church for **donations** of pasta and tinned food, tomatoes and meat balls, to supplement the very limited diet of the children. So many children live below the international poverty level and many suffer badly from malnutrition. Many toddlers have only one meal a day. Poor schoolchildren in some areas who attend school often have to make a choice between paying for the necessary bus fare, since distances are huge, and having a meal.

Plastic bowls, beakers, and spoons and forks are also in short supply at the feeding centre. There will be an opportunity to donate these post-Christmas.

Please take the opportunity to read the recent CH Trust newsletter available in the foyer and visit the Children of Honduras Christmas Tree - together with so many more - at the Christmas Tree Festival.

Further information from Marcia Siefken 9811617

What is Open House ?

Open House is a small (which we would like to become a little larger) group that meets in our homes on a Monday evening for an enjoyable study or discussion on some theme linked to our faith in Christ. Our program is usually very varied. These meetings are led by our members and are very informal. We start at 8.00 pm and finish with coffee/tea and biscuits usually by about 9.30 pm. Everyone is made very welcome and we would be delighted to welcome a few more to our meetings – transport can be arranged if required. For further details please contact Brian Horler (either at Church, by phone 937 6213 or bha1@61mr.eu for those using e-mail).

Monday Afternoon Fellowship

At 39 Violet Road (Home of Mike and Ann Latham) between 2.30pm to 4.00pm

Thanks from the Property Team

The Property Team have asked me to pass on their heartfelt thanks to all the members of church who helped during the Summer Property Fortnight this year. In all, over 20 people were involved, clearing a massive 28 tasks off the Outstanding Jobs List, including the time-consuming deep cleaning of kitchens, tea bays, vestries, carpets, play equipment and much more; the fitting of a larger basin in the disabled toilet, much painting, and a number of repair jobs. We also had professional workers to re-plaster in room 5 and other places where the plasterwork was damaged. In all, over 135 hours of volunteer work was put in saving the church the huge cost of hiring in people to do the work. We are grateful for the help and also the fellowship of working together on this – and look forward to the summer of 2012!

MURIEL MCGARR

Muriel has died in Bexhall at the age of 92. She grew up in our church as a girl and became a member of the Girls League. This was a movement to help girls be keen on mission work. Later Muriel married a Methodist Missionary and the two of them gave outstanding service for many years in Nigeria. After retirement Muriel was widowed and lived in Radcliffe. As she was a local preacher she conducted services back in her own church and many will remember her with affection. We thank God for her services. Dick Jones

FRIARY DROP IN

The collection box is available every week in the foyer for your gifts of tea, coffee, sugar, household and personal items etc. With the present financial situation the centre is under pressure to help those in need. Your gifts are very much appreciated.

DO YOU NEED ME?

I AM THERE

You cannot see me,
 Yet I am the light you see by
You cannot hear me,
 Yet I speak through your voice
You cannot feel me, though I am the power
 At work through your hands
I am at work through you though you
 do not understand my ways
I am at work through you though you
 Do not recognise the work I do
I am not strange visions
 I am not mysterious
Only in absolute silence can you
 Know me as I am
Yet I am there. Yet I hear you, Yet I answer

WHEN YOU NEED ME,

I AM THERE

Even if you deny me, I am there
Even when you feel most alone, I am there
Even in your fears, I am there,
Even in pain, I am there
I am there when you pray
And when you do not pray
Though your faith in me wavers,
My faith in you never wavers
Because I know you,
Because I love you

Beloved child, I am there

AGE, I HAVE DECIDED, IS A GIFT

I am now, probably for the first time in my life, the person I have always wanted to be. Oh, not my body! I sometimes despair over my body, the wrinkles, the baggy eyes, and the sagging butt. And often I am taken back by that old person that lives in my mirror (who looks like my mother/father) but I don't agonize over those things for long.

I would never trade my amazing friends, my wonderful life, and my loving family, for less grey hair or a flatter belly. As I've aged, I've become more kind to myself, and less critical of myself. I've become my own friend.

I don't chide myself for eating that extra cookie, or for not making my bed, or for buying that silly cement gecko that I didn't need, but looks so avante garde on my patio. I am entitled to a treat, to be messy, to be extravagant.

I have seen too many dear friends leave this world too soon, before they understood the great freedom that comes with ageing.

Whose business is it if I choose to read or play on the computer until 4AM and sleep until noon?

I will dance with myself to those wonderful tunes of the 60's and 70's and if I, at the same time, wish to weep over a lost love...I will

I will walk the beach in a swim suit that is stretched over a bulging body, and I will dive into the waves with abandon if I choose to, despite the pitying glances from the jet set. They, too, will get old

I know I am sometimes forgetful. But there again, some of life is just well forgotten. And I eventually remember the important things. Sure, over the years my heart has been broken. How can your heart not break when you lose a loved one, or when a child suffers, or even when some body's beloved pet gets hits by a car? But broken hearts are what gives us strength and understanding and compassion A heart never broken is pristine and sterile and will never know the joy of being imperfect.

I am so blessed to have lived long enough to have my hair turning grey, and to have my youthful laughs be forever etched into deep grooves on my face. So many have never laughed, and so many have died before their hair could turn silver.

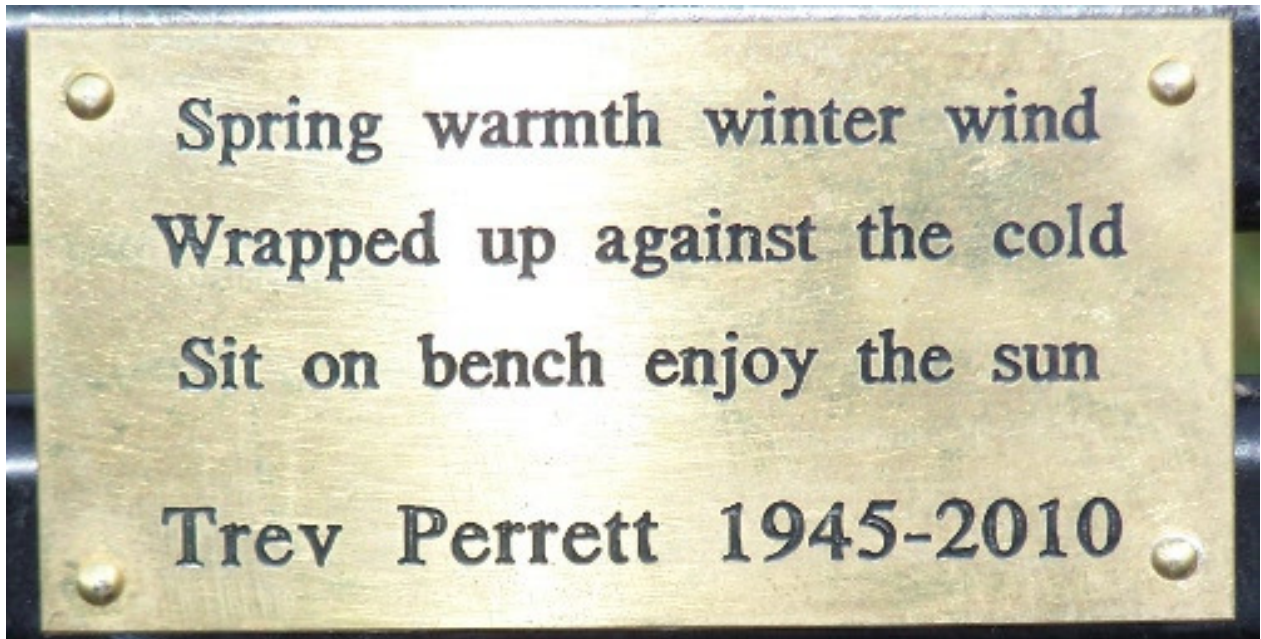
As you get old, it is easier to be positive. You care less about what others think. I don't question myself anymore. I've earned the right to be wrong

So, I like being old. It has set me free. I like the person I have become. I am not going to live forever, but while I am still here. I will not waste time lamenting what could have been, or worrying about what will be. And I shall eat dessert every single day. (If I feel like it)

Source unknown

TREV'S BENCH

If you like a stroll along the Embankment now the work is nearly finished on the City side you can find an equestrian statue of Sir Robert Clifton near the Toll Bridge and just beyond, moving towards Trent Bridge, you will find a tranquil resting place on a new bench carrying a plaque. Read it and you will discover a Haiku beneath the lettering Trev's Bench.



Sit and contemplate the scene across the river to the County side. Enjoy the trees and bushes, as beautiful as anywhere in the world and like the Shiatsu Group donors of the bench in Trev's memory thank God for Trev's life, and his devotion to our fundraising efforts for the refurbishment of the Church and its premises.

Who can forget Trev in his French beret, striped jumper and pencilled on moustache as he rustled up a French menu, or the World War 11 meal based on the Government recipes and the rations. The Spam cocktail sticks piercing a cabbage produced in Myke the never to be forgotten , What's Spam?

The Curry Evening, The Italian meal, and the hilarious European Song Contest Evening where every country entering was represented by some local delicacy and we had to try and score and pick a winner.

Think of his beloved family, still mourning his loss, Janet, Ben and Jo who watched his brave fight to survive and supported him to the end in his lost battle.

Thanks too for all the people past and present who have cherished our buildings and their place in the life of West Bridgford and the world. Let us work together to help realise the vision of our new Minister as he follows in the footsteps of all the leaders since our building opened in 1888.

Georgina (God parents with Allan to Ben and family)

30 October 2011 - A Christening at Goodmanham

Marcia and I travelled on the last Sunday in October to the tiny and very ancient village of Goodmanham for the christening of Michael Jenkins, son of Rocio and Russell Jenkins.

It was a very special occasion for the family and for us. It was also the discovery of a great treasure, All Hallows, a little church built in the 12th century, with two fonts, the “modern” one dating from the Middle Ages, and the original one retrieved after decades on a farm where it had been used as a water trough for animals.

Here is a little about the story of the church. It stands on the site of a heathen temple in Saxon times, the chief centre for the worship of the god Woden, father of the pagan gods. The dramatic conversion of the site from a heathen temple to a Christian church is told by the Venerable Bede.

Coifi, High Priest of Woden at Godmuningham, was convinced by the preaching of Paulinus of the good news of Christ. He seems to have been a man who made up his mind promptly: he mounted a stallion and rode back to the temple of Woden to test the power of the pagan god by flinging a spear into the image inside the enclosure.

Bede records that after hearing Paulinus Coifi cried: “I have long since been sensible that there was nothing in that which we worshipped; because the more diligently I sought after truth in that worship, the less I found it. But such truth evidently appears in this preaching which can confer on us the gifts of life, of salvation and of eternal happiness. For this reason I advise, O King, that we instantly abjure and set fire to those temples and altars which we have consecrated without reaping any benefit from them.”

King Edwin of Northumbria was convinced and founded in AD 627 the great Cathedral Church of York. So York owes its existence to the conversion at Goodmanham (according the Rev J S Purvis, rector of Goodmanham 1938-1941).



Hearing the priest explain to us the meaning of a baptism in the magnificent old building was an unforgettable experience which we shared with Russell’s family, on the mildest sunny October day we can remember.

Hinrich Siefken

Keeping in Touch

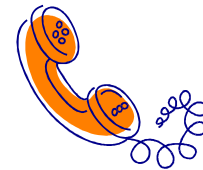
I suspect that it may be quite a long time since you used a quill pen?

Although times change, most of us keep a pen lying around somewhere to jot down a note, or write a shopping list - except that we can never seem to find one when we need it in a hurry!



I think that most of you will have a diary of some sort? Perhaps there is a calendar in the kitchen with all the important events for the family, or maybe you have all your meeting dates stored on a compact modern hand-held device?

To talk to your friends, do you instantly reach for the phone? If you do, I wonder if it is a fixed phone in your house or a mobile phone that you carry around with you – and do you speak to your friends or send them a text message?



And do you have access to a computer? If you do, how regularly do you use email, or is that sort of technology all a closed book to you or something which merely seems to make all contact so impersonal?

Whatever means of communication we use, it is wonderful to be able to keep in touch and to be well informed about what is going on amongst our friends, within our local community and in national and international affairs. We thank God for the gift of communication, and especially when we can use it to make sure that everyone gets the chance to hear the good news of the gospel!

In our church we are currently trying to review the many ways in which we seek to keep in touch with one another, and share information about what is going on, and this article gives some detail about the discussions of our small working group who have been meeting during the past couple of months.

We noted that this magazine, **'Voice'** is an excellent production, and much valued by many members and friends for the information and articles which it contains. It is also well suited to outreach, so that it can be one of the tools in our mission approach to our friends and neighbours, and those folk who use our church premises. Thanks to John Bendall for his excellent work in editing this magazine each quarter.

We heard about the work that has gone on to smarten up our **noticeboards** in the foyer and corridor, so that they contain useful information which is up to date and well presented. You may care to take a closer look and read some of the information about how our church is organised, the way our room lettings are managed and find details of events at this church and neighbouring churches. Thanks to John Thurston for his excellent work in maintaining these noticeboards.

In the future, we are hoping to install a large new sign on Musters Road which will make it clear to our neighbours in the community that we are a church which is very much alive and 'open for business', and present a dynamic image based on our popular logo of the outstretched arms.

We reviewed our new publication the '**Month-at-a-Glance**' diary, which has been available each month since September. It seeks to put in one place lots of the dates and contact details for meetings and events in the life of our church, and it would be good to hear from you what you think about it, and how it might be improved. Currently, we are unable to provide a printed Weekly News Sheet, but instead we are placing brief topical notices on the boards in the entrance hall with information and we hope that these will be appreciated and useful. This will certainly cut down on our paper consumption and reduce weekly printing costs! – but if there's a demand and a volunteer to produce a News Sheet, it could make a come-back?

We have also looked ahead, and it seems that for many of us the real future is in electronic communication. We hope that we may be able to investigate ways of further developing our church **website**

www.wbmethodist.org.uk and if you've not looked at it lately we invite you to visit it and send in your



comments. It would be great if we could use **email** to keep in touch with members and friends and quickly send messages, information and reminders to a large group of people, and it would be good to explore the use of social media, such as **Facebook** which is so successful already in keeping friends in touch with each other.

To help us with this research, we are holding a 'Social Media Workshop' on Thursday 8th December, from 7.00pm – 9.30pm. The evening will be for anyone interested and include an introduction and background to what is social media, covering why (and how) to get started. The presenter, Paul Webster, will show examples of what some other churches are already doing in this field and give ideas for what might be possible in our context.

But most importantly, and to re-assure those who haven't really understood the last two paragraphs! - we promise that we will keep in mind that there is not one perfect answer, and whatever we plan we will seek to make sure everyone gets the information that they need, and that we keep ourselves focussed on mission and outreach. In the end, we all want to share the good news of Jesus and draw more people into our fellowship!

John Heard

Friends of L'Arche in Nottingham

I have been hanging on to send you a newsletter because we are almost our own charity. Because joining L'Arche is a long drawn-out process we have gone ahead to become our own charity, 'The Nottinghamshire Ark', so that we can start welcoming people into a new home sooner rather than later. We continue to be supported by L'Arche UK and hope to become affiliated to the Federation as soon as possible. Our dream started with L'Arche and that is where we are rooted.

We gave Louise Detain, a former L'Arche assistant now living in Nottingham and part of the Faith and Light communities in West Bridgford, the job of doing research for us, and by the end of this month she will produce a report. She has talked with commissioning officers, assistants, parents, people with a learning disability, housing associations, estate agents etc.

The report will be discussed by the trustees, now numbering six, who together with 'The friends', will plan our way forward. We want to keep the momentum going, so will be looking to find £20,000 to employ our first community leader to set up the community. Once charity status is confirmed, Marian Merry and Sally Edwards, two of the trustees who have taken on responsibility to look at fund-raising from trusts and grants, will be sending off applications. They need all the help they can get so if you have ideas of funding streams please get in touch sally.c.edwards@ntlworld.com

Many thanks to the Methodist women of Notts and Derby District who continue to have us as their charity for another year. We're really grateful, not just for the money, but for the publicity you are giving us.

.The 'friends' group will continue to plan events for fun and fund-raising.

Book **our BARN DANCE to be held January 21st at 7pm at St Jude's Church Hall Woodborough Road.** Music will be provided by 'The Windmill Folk' Tickets cost £5. Refreshments will be on sale but bring your own booze!

Please contact a member of L'Arche, purchase your ticket sell as many as you can. It's always a really fun evening.

2. **COMMUNITY FUN**— it's an open invitation to come to the home of Terry and Bernice Taylor, Roseneath, Albert Road, Alexandra Park Nottingham NG3 4JD (they have a big home so all are welcome) on Dec 8th Jan 26th March 22nd from 7pm onwards.

It's a bring and share supper, good conversation, table tennis, pool, the Wii, a jigsaw on the go etc etc Come along and lets build up our community.

Grace and peace to you all

Marian Merry

The Nottinghamshire Ark Barn Dance led by The windmill Folk

(organised by Friends of L'Arche in Nottingham)

Saturday January 21st 7pm £5

St Judes Church Hall, Woodborough Road, Nottingham

READ INTERNATIONAL – ONE MILLION BOOKS

Six years ago students from Nottingham University gave a talk at Nottingham Rotary Club regarding their new community project. The project was to collect, sort and distribute books and computers to Tanzania and setting up educational projects during their summer vocation. The project has expanded through Universities in the UK. I received an E mail on the 18th November 2012 advising me that - Yesterday, the **Duchess of Cornwall** joined the **Tanzanian First Lady**, Mama Kikwete to celebrate our distribution of over **one million books** to over one thousand Tanzanian schools, Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete also attended the event.

Our One Millionth Book, kindly **donated by Usborne books**, was presented by The Duchess of Cornwall and Mama Kikwete to school children from the **WAMA Foundation**. READ International has worked with the WAMA Foundation to provide books for a selection of their schools since 2006. The special guests **met local students** from Kilakala Secondary School in Morogoro, who had helped a team of UK volunteers to renovate their school library this summer. Sophie Cockcroft, a UK volunteer involved with this library renovation commented: "READ International is a youth led charity, with our focus on young people joining together to improve access to education. Literacy is vital to all young people, and even just one book can change the stories of a thousand young people. Working together we can make a difference to ensure all young people have the same opportunities."

Young students from Kigamboni Community Centre performed an **amazing arobatic display** and local dances. READ International has worked with the community centre for the past 12 months providing key educational resources for their community education programme.

Hannah Mitchell, our Chief Executive, made a **key address** to guests and supporters:

"Your Royal Highness's and Your Excellency's presence today adds immense value and recognition to our work. It symbolises the connection between the young people in the UK and Tanzania working together to drive forward change. Literacy is vital to all young people. Working together we can make a difference to ensure all young people have the same opportunities.

READ International could not have achieved the delivery of one million books without the support of many key partners who have believed in us since the very beginning in 2006. I should particularly like to thank our longest-standing partners - The Ministry of Education, The Karimjee Jivanjee Foundation, Usborne Books, METL, The WAMA Foundation, and the British High Commission.

A million books delivered to over one thousand schools in Tanzania has been a phenomenal achievement but it is still a drop in the ocean. There is so much more work to be done. We need to continue our work in order to achieve our shared goal of ensuring every young person in Tanzania is able to access the right books to support their education."

READ International is now **working to distribute two million books**. In Christmas Challenge week on 5th December 2011 we will launch a new campaign as part of the The Big Give. We aim to raise £5,530 from our supporters. With match funding from The Big Give, this will be sufficient to fund the provision of textbooks in a supported learning environment in 20 additional East African schools.

We congratulate the students of Nottingham University on this phenomenal achievement over the past six years. I have had the pleasure of meeting these young people as the project developed and presented them with a Rotary Literacy Award. I am thrilled that Hayley through Emmanuel School is collecting books. I have learnt that Hayley has been praised by the school for the number of books collected. Please continue to give her our support. Thank you Hayley

John Bendall

The Anglican Priest, Scholar and Hymn-writer

JOHN MASON NEALE (1818-1866)

Over the Christmas festival I am sure we shall hear people singing the legendary Boxing Day Carol 'Good King Wenceslas'. Let us pause for a few moments and consider the author of this famous carol.

John Mason Neale was perhaps the most prolific, and certainly one of the greatest hymn-writers the Church of England has ever produced.

He was born in London and educated at Sherborne School in Dorset, and Trinity College, Cambridge. Whilst at Cambridge he became a fervent disciple of the Oxford Movement from which developed the Anglo-Catholic tradition which is still evident in the Church of England today. Neale stood up for its principles all through his life, often at great cost. On occasions he was physically attacked and an unruly mob once threatened to burn down his house.

He was ordained when still a young man and became Vicar of Crawley, Sussex, but ill health that plagued him all his life made him leave the parish after only six weeks. Doctors advised him that his only chance of survival was to spend the winters in a warm climate. So, for three years he wintered in Madeira, only returning to England in the summer. During this period he travelled widely in Britain and Western Europe, though he was never able to visit Eastern Europe where his great interest lay in the Orthodox Churches. Aided by the excellent library in the seminary in Madeira he became absorbed by the architecture, decoration and liturgy of those churches.

At the age of 28, Neale became the Warden of Sackville College in East Grinstead, Sussex, a home for 20 elderly people. The duties of the Warden were scarcely onerous and brought him the miserly income of £28 per year – but gave him the opportunity to write himself into all the hymn books of the Christian world. His humble post allowed him to study and write which he did to great effect. His massive output included scholarly histories, sermons, children's stories and memorably, hymns. It is true that many were translations from Latin and Greek, but they were enriched by his poetic gifts.

More than anyone else he made English-speaking congregations aware of the centuries-old tradition of Latin, Greek, Russian and Syrian hymns.

He is perhaps best remembered for his contribution to the Christmas repertoire, most notably 'Good Christian Men Rejoice', much of the translation of the Advent hymn 'O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, as well as 'Good King Wenceslas'.

Apart from his hymns, Neale's most lasting memorial is the St. Margaret's sisterhood that he founded at East Grinstead. At that time there was much poverty in the area and this was matched by a spiritual destitution. In an effort to overcome these factors, he founded what has become one of the most famous of Anglican women's communities.

Therefore, this Christmas as we sing 'Good King Wenceslas' or any of his other hymns let us remember that although he died at the early age of 48, few men can have left behind them so much after so short a life time.

Derek Hopewell

WEST BRIDGFORD METHODIST CHURCH

December 2011 – Prayer Issues



Our World and our country

- For those for whom 2011 will be a time of suffering and struggle
- For Christians throughout the world who are being persecuted for their faith
- For all places throughout the world where there is conflict from factions inside or outside the country.
- For refugees and asylum seekers wherever they are in the world
- For the Holy Land, especially for the completed mission of Rev Nichola Jones who visited her projects. Please pray for the safety of all Christians, especially those in Bethlehem who are struggling daily. Pray too for the Israeli soldiers who are being obliged to treat children and peace protectors in an unfair manner (talk to Dick and Kath if you are interested.) Nichola felt your prayers while she was there..
- Pray too for the countries of the Middle East post Gaddafi, and the African countries which are currently suffering unrest and civil disobedience which threatens the stability of the region and the world.
- For all who are losing jobs as the economic situation worsens in Europe
- For Eurozone countries like Greece, Portugal, Spain and Ireland struggling to balance their debt crises
- For our Government and their compassion for those most affected by the cuts

Our Community

- For all with whom we come into contact in our daily lives, especially those who indicate that they want us to pray for them. Please look in the entrance hall at the Prayer Request book and pray
- Thanks for all the people who help to run our church and its premises.
- Pray for all our young people at school and College or University. May the year ahead be fruitful and purposeful.
- Pray for the success of the Christmas Tree Festival and Christmas Fair Weekend 25th – 27th. Encourage your friends to visit this new venture and where possible offer to help.
- Bless all the primary children who will visit on Friday Nov 24th for a private view.

Our Church

- For our worship life and our growing in faith
- For our Superintendent Minister Rev Dr Paul Hill, his wife Joan and their son Richard
- Pray for our music groups and those who provide the music each Sunday.
- For more volunteers to play the piano or the organ and for donations to organist fund
- For our caretaker John Johnson and his church team and their success, especially for their Pastor Roy who is leading the mission to India, that he will be fit, and that more people will be brought into the light of God. As they begin their mission. Pray for all who work quietly behind the scenes keeping the church fit during John's three week absence and every week.
- For the Framework Concert on Tuesday 13th December. Come along
- Pray for the Advent Circuit Service Advent Praise on Sunday at 6.30pm
- Pray for the family baptism in the morning service on Dec 4th
- For 'The Journey of the Magi' Springs dance Company performance on Sunday 18th December at 5.00pm. Suitable for all ages.
- Pray for the Nativity Service at 10.30am on the 18th
- For our Fellowship and prayer groups and the use of the prayer room.
- Pray for the Christingle Service at 4.00pm on SATURDAY 24th (11pm service at URC)
- For the Family Praise on Christmas Day at 10.30am and JAN 1st 2012 2.30pm COVENANT

Individuals in need ours and any of our members

- Pray for those who have lost loved ones in 2010\11, that they may be comforted
- Pray for those whose loved ones are carrying heavy burdens that they shall have strength
- Pray for our members in hospital or recovering at home.
- Pray that people will be drawn into Church .
- Pray for yourselves that you have the inspiration to help through the Christmas Festivities

A Prayer for Those Who Live Alone

I live alone, dear Lord
Stay by my side
In all my daily needs
Be thou my guide

Grant me good health
For that indeed I pray
To carry on my work
From day to day

Keep pure my mind
My thoughts, my every deed
Let me be kind, unselfish
In my neighbour's need

Spare me from fire, from flood,
Malicious tongues,
From thieves, from fear
And evil ones

If sickness or an accident befall
Then humbly, Lord, I pray
Hear thou my call

And when I'm feeling low
Or, in despair
Lift up my heart
And help me in prayer

I live alone Lord
Yet have no fear
Because I feel your presence
Ever near
Amen

Make the world smile

I have always been keen to encourage my children to make the most of modern technology. So for their birthdays I decided to buy my eldest daughter an iPhone, my son an iPad and for my youngest daughter an iPod. I was worried, however that my wife might feel left out, so when our wedding anniversary rolled around I bought her an iPhone, that did not do at all well.

A prayer

Lord, when we feel faint and weary, as we so often do, please remind us to claim your promise to make us strong.

The Library

Eerily silent

Robotic machines have replaced

Friendly counter staff.

Blue lights wink the way

To take out or return your books.

Faceless screens, ever ready to rebuke

Too slow, too late,

Take it to the desk

For humane, human help.

Computers in quiet rows

Wrap around the reading room.

No rustling,

Bustling, as glazed eyes stare

At e books on line.

No chat, no fingering of pages.

Is print on paper

Redundant

Along with the Librarians?

I have written the following poem as travelling around Bridgford I hear these concerns. Geogina.

The Methodist Church-West Bridgford

Diary of Special Services and Events

December 2011

1st Womens Fellowship 2.30pm
4th Rev Dr Paul Hill 10.30am
Holy Communion
Faith & Light 3.00pm
6th Tuesday group 7.30pm
8th Women's Fellowship 2.30pm
11th Monica Heard 10.30am
Readings & Songs for Christmas
Contemporary Worship 6.30pm
15th Womens Fellowship 2.30pm
18th Rev Dr Paul Hill 10.30am
(Nativity Service)
'Journey of the Magi' 5.30pm
24th Christmas Eve
Family Christingle Service 4.00pm
25th Christmas Day
Family Worship 10.30am

2012 January

1st New Years Day
Rev Dr Paul Hill 2.30pm
Covenant Service
Faith & Light 3.00pm

3rd Tuesday Group 7.30m
5th Womens Fellowship 2.30pm
8th Roger Johnson 10.30am
Fun Zone 4.00pm
Tea & Toast 5.00pm

Links Contemporary Worship 5.30pm

12th Womens Fellowship 2.30pm
Leadership Meeting 7.30pm
15th Rev R Jones 10.30am
Rev Dr Paul Hill 3.00pm
(Holy Communion)

19th Womens Fellowship 2.30pm

22nd Christian Unity
Rev Dr Paul Hill 10.30am

Tea Time Praise for Families 4.00pm

26th Womens Fellowship 2.30pm

29th Homelessness Sunday

Monia Heard 10.30am

February

2nd Womens Fellowship 2.30pm

5th Education Sunday

President of Methodist Conference
Ruth Pickles and our Minister

Holy Communion 10.30am

Faith & Light 3pm

7th Tuesday Group 7.30pm

9th Womens Fellowship 2.30pm
12th Rosie Farrow 10.30am
Fun Zone 4.00pm
Tea & Toast 5.00pm
Links Contemporary Worship 5.30pm
16th Womens Fellowship 2.30pm
19th Rev Dr Paul Hill 10.30am
Rev Dr Paul Hill 3.00pm
(Holy Communion)
23rd Womens Fellowship 2.30pm

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