

Buxton Circuit Newsletter

December/January 2009/2010

Dear Friends,

Two questions. First, “Why was Jesus born?”

John in his Gospel suggests that Jesus came so that the world might know God’s “truth and grace”. When Jesus spoke about his mission to reveal God’s truth and love, he used these words of Isaiah:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.

The second question is this, “Why – or for what purpose – does your church exist and how does it fulfil what God wants of it?” Clearly, the Church exists because of the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The challenge for us is to work out what it means for us, here and now, to reveal the truth and grace of God in the world of today.

The Methodist Church expects every church to work out a short statement about what they feel God wants of them. Often these statements are based around the four priorities of the Methodist Church:

- Worship
- Learning and Caring
- Service
- Evangelism

So we think how we create the kind of worship God wants; how we help each other to grow as Christians; what it means to be a Servant Church and how we make more followers of Jesus.

I’d be grateful if each of our senior stewards could arrange with me a time when the church can gather together. We will ask these questions and create a short statement about where we are going and how we intend to get there!

This Mission Statement will (hopefully) ensure that when we talk about our church's life we will remember our fundamental aims and objectives.

God began something extraordinary that first Christmas. This Christmas may his love and peace fill our hearts and be expressed in our lives.

Colin

BIBLE READING NOTES

One good "New Year's Resolution" would be to read your Bible day by day with the help of Bible Reading Notes. The Christian Bookshop in the Market Place at Buxton would be glad to help you (26843) - or you can order the notes on-line.

If you would like the church to order them for you, then please contact the Circuit Office on 27065 or myself on 23556. If you are leaving a message please give your name, phone number, the title of the notes and the number of copies required. If possible, please phone by **21st. December!**

We will try and get them to you by the beginning of the New Year. There may be an additional cost if they are sent directly to your home.

Liberal – with writers from around the world

IBRA (International Bible Reading Association)

<http://www.christianeducation.org.uk/ibra.htm>

"Light for our Path 2010" OR **"Words for Today 2010"**

A year's Bible readings and notes costs £8.50 for 12 months

Theologically - traditional

BRF (Bible Reading Fellowship)

<http://www.brf.org.uk>

"New Daylight" for January to April is a four monthly book of daily Bible Readings, comments and prayers, costing **£3.70**

More conservative... but good

Scripture Union

<http://www.scriptureunion.org.uk/Shop/BibleGuides/10080.id>

"Daily Bread" OR **"Closer to God"** OR **"Encounter with God"** contains readings and notes for three months and cost £3.50.

Don't get bamboozled by this!!! Phone Colin (23556) if he can help.

WORSHIP LEADERS

There are many reasons why Worship Leaders can be of great help to a church. They can:

- Assist a Local Preacher or Minister in preparing and/or leading some part of a service.
- They can lead an act of worship, without preaching, with an awareness of what makes "helpful worship".
- They can bring an awareness of local needs and possibilities to the worship led by those from outside the local community.

Because our worship is important there is a process by which Worship Leaders become recognised officially by a local church.

- Worship leaders must be members of the Methodist Church.
- They must be approved as candidates both by the Local Preachers' Meeting and by their Church Councils.
- They must meet the Methodist Church's safeguarding requirements. (This does **not** require a CRB check.)
- They must follow an approved course of training.
- If the training is completed satisfactorily and the Local Preachers Meeting and their Church Council agree then they will be appointed for an initial three years to serve in their local church.

Please think and pray about this. Please don't let your age, either youth or maturity, discourage you! It would be wonderful if at least one person from each chapel would consider training to be a Worship Leader.

If you would be interested in sharing in the Worship Leaders Course, please let me know by 15th January or phone me to discuss this further.

I will consult with our churches and Local Preachers to gain their agreement that those who offer for this ministry can go forward to begin their training.

The first meeting will be at The Manse on Thursday, 28th January at 7.30 when we will plan when and where to meet to suit the convenience of all involved. (If you can't attend on the 28th .I will meet with you separately.)

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

How about these:

- Read my Bible with the help of reading notes each day
- Invite someone to come with me to church or offer to bring a child to a suitable service/Sunday Club for young people.
- I will be very positive about the contribution of young people to my church
- Tell my minister or church leader what would help me grow in my Christian faith.
- Be involved in serving others in at least one community activity and one church activity as an expression of my Christian commitment.

FINALLY - A dubious story for those who've got this far!

Patrick moved to Armagh and bought a donkey from a farmer for £100.00. The farmer agreed to deliver the donkey the next day. The following day he drove up and said, 'Sorry son, but I have some bad news, the donkey died.'

Patrick replied, 'Well, then just give me my money back.'

The farmer said, 'I can't do that. I went and spent it already.'

Patrick said, 'Ok, then, just bring me the dead donkey.'

The farmer asked, 'What are ya gonna do with him?'

Patrick said, 'I'm going to raffle him off.'

The farmer said, 'You can't raffle off a dead donkey!'

Patrick said, 'Sure I can. Watch me. I just won't tell anybody he's dead.'

A month later, the farmer met up with Patrick and asked, 'What happened with that dead donkey?'

Patrick said, 'I raffled him off. I sold 500 tickets at two pounds a piece and made a profit of £898.00.'

The farmer said, 'Didn't anyone complain?'

Patrick said, 'Just the guy who won. So I gave him his two pounds back.'

Final, final thought

Which charities might my church support this Christmas: e.g Christian Aid, Action for Children, MRDF, Methodist Church Appeal for Cumbria?