

Excited about Mission!

January 2012

Please don't hesitate to contact me regarding anything in this letter. I would love to hear from you, **especially if you want ideas or help with outreach in your area!**

Andy Wilcock - doc@thewru.co.uk (Home Missions - Development and Outreach Consultant)

Martin Ludbrook – ypd.co@thewru.co.uk (YPD Youth Worker)

Reporting Back

Aldermans Green - Coventry

A great time up to and including Christmas

We had no idea how many people would come to our church over the weeks leading up to the Christmas period. From the 15th of December through to Christmas day it was a busy time with the Aldermans Green Junior School holding their Christingle service in our building where the whole 300+ were crammed into the church it was a great start.

Then on to something that brought people into the church for entertainment was the pantomime.

The young people under the direction of a very skilled man produced Cinderella a very entertaining and well executed show. 4 shows with over 100 in attendance, saw 400+ come through the School rooms during that time.

On Sunday the 18th we had the Sunday School leading a Nativity service when over 100 were there to enjoy the young peoples work in presenting the Christmas story in a very clear way.

In the evening service 80+ folk attended the Carol service.

With parties for the young folk and house groups during the next week, the invitation for the Choir and anyone else to sing carols in the local Pub saw 30+ going to share the good news in song with those who regularly go to the Bird in Hand.

Then on Christmas eve we had our Christingle service to which over 300 came and on the next morning over 80 attended the Christmas morning service.

So over the period of 11 days between 1200 & 1300 people came through the premises, I don't know how you would describe that but it seems there would be elements of pre evangelism, outreach & mission involved along the way.

We were very excited about what God was doing for us, through us and despite us.

Peter Norton

Rushden High St Church – Wellingborough Circuit

We organised a **Cinema morning** for the Wednesday before Christmas when the children were off school. Invited families to come and watch a short Christmassy, cartoon film about Elves, then refreshments and then a Vegitales children's film about the meaning of Christmas. We had about 100 people attending. It was free of charge. We invited our Parent/Toddler Group families, our Youth Club families, our Sunday School families. It was an opportunity we had of advertising the special Christmas services we had planned.

Christingle Service - As well as the usual Christmas Church services we organised a Christingle Service on Christmas Eve at 4pm. The church was packed, there were a lot of families we didn't know and hadn't seen before. It was a really lovely time. Again it was a time when we could invite people to other things at our church.

School Choir - We also invited a local infant school choir to sing during a morning service early in December. This attracted all their families to come and see them perform, this was another opportunity when we could invite families to other events.

Coming Year - I think at High St Church, Rushden we will be concentrating on the needs of keeping our Church building going financially and in good repair etc which may mean some

enormous changes/decisions that will need to be made in the coming months. So please pray for the Church Leaders, Church members as we have meetings to discuss everything.

Outreach in to schools - Rev Phil Hearson regularly goes in to all the local junior and infant school and has built up a good relationship with them and the children have come to know him and who he is. He has also become involved in being a Governor for one of the schools. It's good to be involved in the local community.

Plans for the coming year - In the coming year we will be continuing with our monthly **TOAST** meetings in the church hall before the morning service where we have breakfast time together and Phil gives a short family 5 minutes with the big screen. People can opt to go home after this or stay on for the service in the church. The Church Leaders also meet once a month for breakfast and prayer together before the morning service.

Our Sunday school is continuing to grow which we are thrilled about and we hope to continue to minister in a fun way to our children, so please pray for these children and the families they represent.

We will probably be looking towards our Easter Craft afternoon which we usually organise for Good Friday afternoon to co-inside with the March of Witness which goes through the town and stops outside of our Church for a service. We will invite all our families that we are in touch with from the weekly activities.

Other than that not sure what else we will be doing at the moment. Always open to new ideas/changes to improve things, to reach out to others and to look after the Church family that we have already.

Jeanette Maddams

Bonsall – Bakewell Circuit

Our Ladies Choir has expanded to include 6 gentlemen and we have had the privilege of singing carols at one out door event in Cromford Mill and then on another occasion, as part of the Cromford Christmas Market, as it was rather cold, we sang in the Boat Inn, which was definitely a first in the history of singing at Chapel! It was just so good to be able to use these opportunities to share the true meaning of Christmas. We enjoyed a lovely Christmas Carol Service on 18 Dec, followed by a Bring & Share Tea and then on Monday 19 Dec in the evening, we toured the village with friends from the Assembly of God singing carols and finished at Chapel for light refreshments.

We open Chapel 2.00 - 4.00pm on the third Friday in each month and serve tea, coffee and home baking free of charge, as a means of outreach. We had a full house in November when we had a visit from the Leprosy Mission Representative with neighbours attending who had never been in Chapel before!! December was a special Christmas event.

Please could you pray for this Friday Open Afternoon that we may be led by the Lord as we seek to witness for Him.

Judy Land

Ebenezer Church, Langley High Street - Oldbury

As for what we did at Christmas:

- We gave out chocolates or shortbread and an initiation to our Christmas services to all the shops, businesses, schools, community groups and churches with an invite to our Christmas services.
- We gave out home-made mince pies and balloons with our service times on and invites at our carols around the tree
- We did carol-singing at a community event in the local community centre
- We were the venue for the light ceremony, which had fire-eaters, fair rides, street dancers etc etc
- I did a Christmas service at the local primary school in which the parents were invited
- Me and the wife posted the invitations around the doors

That would be great, here are the big issues:

- As a church we lose 11k in rental income this year
- A number of our church members are in need of healing
- I have been asked to do some chaplaincy within the RAF cadets and in the local probation centre
- We have an outreach running on Sun evenings from Sun 19th Feb - Sun 1st Apr, with a team from a local bible college

Steve Karma

Church on the Rock – West Midlands

It's good to hear from you!

Yes Christmas was a raging success story! We had a Youth that Rocks presentation in which some of the youth organized the programme of singing and Christmas stories and bible readings. Some youth members did songs, some helped in the kitchen with mince pies and coffee, some did a reading or story. a number of parents came along and supported us.

Moms and toddlers had 50 parents and children along, friendships are being formed and support is given each week. the local health visitor comes along occasionally and strong links with Surestart are being built. We find that many of our youth were brought along as babies by their mom's and this gives a strong link into their lives.

The local school (Primary) came along for their annual nativity. Approximately 100 children came in and sang to their parents and teachers. the teachers did the bible readings and I did a story (including mad actions about animals) about why a donkey was chosen.

And finally, the carols by candlelight service was fantastic with a number of those who had been to recent craft days and coming to youth coming along. some even did readings. a very poignant moment in the evening was when a teenage boy with Tourette's did a reading for us and everyone applauded.

We plan on much more of the same, including craft days

Please pray for the youth group for strong friendships to be formed and for God to continue to move. Pray for the leaders as we transition with Ken retiring this week.

Pray for mom's and toddlers that some very lonely mom's will come to know Jesus as Saviour and Lord. Pray for me

Thanks **Jackie Clarke**

Deddington Church - Oxfordshire

Hi Andy, in reply to your e mail. At Christmas we joined with the parish church in sending out a Christmas card to every home in the village (It was put in the Deddington News) On the card it gave all services from the 1st Sunday in Advent through to our Covenant Service on January 1st. Please will you pray that our friends from the Congregational church feel secure and loved enough to come into membership of our church. Also would you prayer for the Lord to show us how and where and give us the opportunity to share our faith with people we meet in the village.

Pastor Izzy Walton

Griffydam - Ashby

At Griffydam we will be running a half-term holiday club.

It will be Dave Godfrey's 'Rocky's Plaice' run between February 13th and 15th (set in a fish & chip restaurant).

It is based around the character of Peter and the stories of the early church, learning what it means to be part of Jesus' chosen people.

Cliff Darby

Fritwell Church - Oxfordshire



For our Christmas Carol Rally we were entertained to a very enjoyable evening of music from the Brackley Junior Brass Band with excellent and hilarious compering from the conductor's husband, John Bennet. It was great to have a very full Church for this occasion and great refreshments enjoyed after in the schoolroom.

We were well supported by our friends from Syresham.

We held our Carol Service on the Sunday before Christmas which was led by Don Walker. His theme was gifts and giving. Don had an Advent apron with small gifts inside pockets. Members of the congregation then had to answer questions from the Bible, or to do with Christmas, and the answer was a number on the pockets. The person with the correct number then received the gift in the pocket. This service again was well attended and gave lots of opportunities for the congregation to take part; by choosing their

favourite carol, saying a prayer, or reading from the Bible.

The new disabled toilet is now complete.

We look forward to a very spiritually blessed 2012, which is our 120th anniversary.

Joan Harris

The Crowded House (Sharrow Vale – Sheffield)

Leading up to Christmas we helped hold a Market in local community, this then coincided with our carols service in the afternoon. Both were well attended by people in the community.

On Christmas day we also held a meeting. Our smaller communities also hosted dinners for family and friends etc.

Leading up to Easter our communities are all actively involved in various mission opportunities.

We have groups working closely with international students in Broomhall, teaching English as a second language in Sharrow, running live music events in Sharrowvale etc. We will host a Easter service and seek to bring those relationships along.

Rowan Paterson

Richmond Church – Sheffield

We have Derek Cleave coming to us on Saturday/Sunday/Monday 17-19th March. it will be a mini-mission.

In brief - on Saturday evening Derek will be speaking on "The Second Coming" - aimed at Christians but non-Christians welcome. The meeting will be held in our church and is open to anyone to come along. No charge.

Sunday morning will be an outreach event. "Mothers Day" Celebration followed by a buffet lunch afterwards. We hope children we have contact with and their parents will come along and stay for lunch afterwards..

Sunday evening will be a "Songs of Praise" service, again we hope to get visitors along, other churches are welcome to join with us.

Monday afternoon - Afternoon tea and an evangelistic talk by Derek. Open to anyone.

Monday Evening will be a men only meeting. It will consist of a meal and an evangelistic message by Derek. The event will be held at the Fairways at Birley, tickets cost £5 per person (for the meal and coffee).

This is a rough outline of what we will be doing. If you would like further details I can supply them.

Jim Braddock

Oughtibridge – Sheffield

We run a Bible club called Discoverers in the local primary school; it is open to any children in years 1 and 2 – out of about 100 children we get 33 children coming along for half an hour in a lunchtime once a week. This is our 4th year in operation and we have been consistently amazed and thrilled at how many children sign up (with parental permission) and come along so enthusiastically – we have had to split them into 2 groups (attending on alternating half terms) because of the large numbers. We are very thankful that the Head Teacher is so positive about our doing this, and feel very much that involvement of our church members in the school in various capacities has helped to open up this opportunity. Please pray that these young ones would discover something of who God is and what He is like so that they would have a foundation for deciding to become one of His followers at some point in the future.

Each Christmas we give each 'Discoverer' a gift of a Bible story book along with a card and an invitation to our Nativity Service which is organised and presented by our children and young people and their leaders. We always have some Discoverer families take up the invitation and this Christmas there were more than any previous year.

Our Carols by Candlelight Service also drew many families, through various school and personal relationships – some of our members worked hard at giving invitations by email and verbally, which proved very worthwhile.

Another venture started just over a year ago is a men's group called the Forum. It is run as a community group rather than a 'church group', and provides a variety of activities for men (mainly recently retired) on one morning a fortnight; they rotate their activities between having someone come to speak, doing jobs for local people who need some help (eg gardening/DIY for the elderly/disabled) and going out walking. They can have as many as 18 men attending, many of them non-church people.

We also used the Carols by Candlelight Service as an opportunity to invite several of these men and their wives, followed by supper at our house. Everyone we invited accepted the invitation and enjoyed the evening!

We feel very thankful to God for the opportunities our Christmas events provided to further relationships in these groups and enable people to be exposed to the gospel message. It is intriguing to see how God works in giving several of us an individual link with one individual – this happens many times.

As for the months ahead, you might pray that we would be creative and sensitive in knowing how to take some of these relationships further to introduce Jesus into them – we all need courage and boldness to do this but we none of us want to run ahead of God. Pray we would be quick to spot doors of opportunity opening and take appropriate action.

Jackie Shapland

Oxford Road Church - Mexborough

We held a family nativity service on Sunday the 18th December. All of the Sunday School children took part in the presentation entitled 'Listen Little Shepherd Boy'. There was also a presentation of clips from the film 'Polar Express' and the message to the congregation centred around the word 'believe'. Over 150 people attended the service. We thank God for the opportunity of freely sharing the true message of Christmas with our community.

Lisa Taylor



Mortimer West End – Countess of Huntingdon

Two topics for prayer from Berkshire.

We are working with other churches to open a drop in cafe in Burghfield starting February. Proper coffee! Pray that we get in the parents after their school drop-off!

With strong support from our local senior school we are working up a proposal for school pastors (like Street Pastors, only at the school). This would be a first for a rural community. Pray for it to fit together, that we find the volunteers, and for those planning it.

Details will appear on our web page from time to time. www.togetherinmission.org.uk

Brian Baldwin

EaM – Special Series – Church Holidays **Bozeat – Overstrand, Norfolk**



We as a church went away for August Bank Holiday weekend. We went to The Pleasants at Overstrand Norfolk. It is a Christian centre and is fantastic. It is run by Charlie and Veronica Buxton and a voluntary staff of young people from all over the world. The gardens are quiet and peaceful with plenty of games to play if you are feeling energetic. We met every morning and evening for prayers and worship and a word from Geoffrey. Then it was out and about with the beach just down the road. I have attached a few photos if you want to use them.

love from everyone at Bozeat and God's blessings to you all
Pat

I would love to come and visit your church to speak or chat with you about outreach opportunities in your area. Please get in touch I would love to hear from you.

Yours in His service

Andy Wilcock

WRU : Development and Outreach Consultant.