

# Alive!

News from  
Totley Rise  
Methodist Church

June/July/August 2009

## At the Cross



There was a refreshing mixture of old and new in our Easter worship this year. On Palm Sunday we welcomed back Spirit the donkey for the traditional walk of witness to the church from the Cross Scythes. The Youth Church re-enacted Jesus' triumphant entry to Jerusalem and the overturning of the tables in the temple. Good Friday saw the service in the car park again, though the weather made it look unlikely until a few minutes before the start. The next weekend Garry and Nick Whitworth provided breakfast between early communion and the main Easter Sunday service.

In the intervening week there was a prayer meeting on the Wednesday

night and the following evening there was a novel new service devised

by Sheila Cooper who writes:

"On the evening of Maundy Thursday, no other service being planned, we decided to do something different at Totley Rise. It was a meditation or reflection with music and drama entitled *At the Cross*.

Six lady actors in traditional Jewish costume played characters who were friends or relatives of Jesus.



They described in a personal way their connection to Him and how they felt as they watched him suffer in that terrible week culminating in His death. Then six 'modern' women presented to the cross objects associated with the

crucifixion and Jesus' teachings.

The service included congregational hymns and moving performances of *I Don't know How to Love Him* (from Jesus Christ, Superstar) and *Thorns in the Straw* (from Rumours of Angels) sung by Trish Dearden and Anne Richie.

My sincere thanks to all who gave their time and talents to make this a moving and meaningful experience - the outstanding actors, the soloists who sang so sincerely and beautifully, Linda Wareham and Sylvia Holloway the pianists, Ruth for the posters, Viv for stewarding and to Anne Wiles for all her help.

Sheila Cooper



# A Cheerful Heart is Good Medicine

I heard a conversation on the radio recently about how one theatre in Nottingham was scaling down on the number of comedians the theatre booked. One guest presenter thought it a little unwise to do so especially in hard economic times. He felt that these are days when we need to be able to laugh, to have, even for a moment, a brief respite from all of the things we are constantly told we should be worried and guarded about.

We only have to look at a newspaper or listen to the news and we are quickly reminded that the world and our society is not all it could be. However, almost all news broadcasts finish with a nice story. Why? To make us feel safe and good again about our lives and to spare us from the creeping depression, that threatens to engulf us.

It was Aristotle who said that laughter is a bodily exercise precious to health, and, according to Mark Twain, humour is mankind's greatest blessing. As a nation, we have been blessed with some wonderful comedians who lead us into that place of laughter which is often said to be 'good for the soul'.

The bible has a little bit to say to us about joy and laughter:

Proverbs 17:22 *A cheerful heart is good medicine.*

Job 8:21 *He (God) will yet fill your mouth with laughter and your lips with shouts of joy.*

Ecclesiastes 3:4 *There is a time for everything... a time to weep and a time to laugh.*

Psalms 16:11 *...in your (God's) presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures for evermore.*

Proverbs 15:13 *A happy heart makes the face cheerful, but heartache crushes the spirit.*

Psalms 126:2 *Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy.*

I don't know about you, but as someone with rather a raucous laugh, I rather enjoy laughter. Laughter can be infectious. I also love to hear other people laugh. My six year old son has a little joke book and it's wonderful to see him so amused at the jokes in this book. Often times, he 'laughs his little head off', which, for any parent to see their children so carefree and enjoying life, is a very beautiful thing indeed.

For many people life today would seem to offer little to laugh about. If we believe what commentators say on the state of the nation, politics and the economy, we are, in the words of Private James Frazer of Dad's Army fame, 'doomed'! However, 'Don't panic' for God who has made us in His image has given us the ability to laugh – a cheerful heart is good medicine.

To that end, and because it is good to laugh together, **Totley Rise Methodist Church**, in partnership with our friends at **All Saints, Totley**, are hosting a Free Comedy night at the "**Fleur De Lys**" pub on **Friday 26 June at 8.00 pm.**

Andy Kind and Tony Vino are two alternative



comedians who are using their comic talents bringing laughter to the four corners of the UK.

So, come along, sit back and enjoy an evening of wholesome comedy entertainment.

Love and every blessing,

*Garry Dawson-Jones*

The evening is free (buy your own drinks from the bar) and by invitation, so for more details and invitations, speak to Garry Dawson-Jones Tel: 2363157, or David Rhodes Tel: 2362322.

# Bearing Fruit

*“This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”*

John’s gospel chapter 15 verse 8

**F**ruit was the main item on the menu at Totley Rise in March! Not the apple and pear kind but the love and care kind, the kind of fruit (qualities/characteristics) that Jesus said would grow in us, and influence the lives of those around us, when we truly live as his disciples.

In response to a recent review of the church’s life and mission in our Methodist Circuit, Totley Rise (along with our seven sister churches) set aside five weeks in Lent to work through Robert Schnase’s discipleship series, “Cultivating Fruitfulness”. During the course of five Sunday morning services we were encouraged to move from the ordinary to the extraordinary by practising *radical hospitality, passionate worship, intentional faith development, risk taking mission & service* and *extravagant generosity* – “Five practices”, which Robert Schnase claims, “have transformed the lives of hundreds of congregations and thousands of Christian disciples”.

There was much to excite and challenge and the daily programme of prayer and bible reading, which involved the whole congregation, and the opportunity to share together in our fellowship groups added to the richness of the experience.

Lent may be over but our thinking, working and praying in order to become more fruitful disciples of Jesus certainly isn’t. We look forward to a special church day on **Saturday, 17 October** when we will seek to understand and apply all that God is saying to us through this. Hope to see you there.

*Viv Thomas*

## What *Leading Worship* means to me

**I**t all began about 15 years ago when I was on a Retreat weekend at Bawtry Hall. During a time of ministry I was told that the Lord would use me to lead His people. As I had no musical skills or singing ability this was quite a surprise to me to say the least! Some years later I found myself in the worship group and, after some encouragement, on the Worship Leaders’ course. I was still very unsure about the whole thing so I asked the Lord to confirm if this was His plan for me. A few weeks into the course He did!

I could not lead worship in my own strength. I have to rely on and trust in the Lord and because of this my faith has grown. I have learnt that when the Lord calls us to do some work for Him, or asks us to step out in faith, He fully equips us and uses us in ways we would have never thought possible.

The Lord has given me a real passion for worship in all its many forms and I am constantly looking out for fresh ways to make it more real, more meaningful and more relevant. The Lord has also given me a real love for His people.

In his book *Cultivating Fruitfulness* Robert Schnase writes ‘God uses worship to transform lives, heal wounded souls, renew hope, shape decisions, provoke change, inspire compassion and bind people together’. Leading God’s people into His presence is a huge responsibility. It is also a great privilege and joy. I have been blessed to see God at work in His people as I have encouraged them to draw closer to Him.

Being a Worship Leader is part of God’s plan for my life and a way in which I can both serve Him and also serve His people at TRM.

*Anne Wiles*

## Not Swimming or Drowning

**T**here is an old joke about someone seen waving out at sea. The punchline is that they were not swimming but drowning. Come to TRM on the morning of **Sunday 19 July** and you will find a large tank of water with people in it. They will be neither swimming nor drowning – they will be adults being baptised by immersion as a witness to their Christian faith. Come to hear them tell you why they are doing this and what it means for them.

# From our Oz Correspondents



Our short term move down under coincided with the release of the epic motion picture *Australia*; thankfully our antipodean adventure has born very little resemblance to a film that was long, boring and involved some exceptionally wooden acting. In fact quite the opposite with time flying (we are nearly halfway through our 6 months), a seemingly non-stop set of mini adventures and some very animated acting (mostly from Alistair at work, as he tries to convince the locals that there is a better way to do things). What we have found in common with the film is spectacular scenery and a country whose vastness has to be experienced to appreciate its scale. This has been brought home to us on many occasions, but particularly when we visited the Blue Mountains on Good Friday. The vast gum tree covered canyons, sheer rock faces and tumbling waterfalls created a new sense of awe at God's fantastic creation.

We are living in a suburb of Melbourne just south of the city centre or CBD as they like to call it here. Matthew and Christopher have settled in to the local primary school and have enjoyed getting to grips with the nuances of education Oz style, the highlight being the chance to sing the national anthem at assembly every Monday morning! Liz meanwhile has taken the opportunity of a break from teaching and the English climate to improve her tennis.

Virtually from day one in Melbourne we have been blessed by the friendship of the people we have met. Finding a church was proving harder than we had hoped (given our short stay here we didn't want to spend weeks finding somewhere we felt happy), however in less than 2 weeks God had pointed Liz

in the direction of a mum at school who it turned out lived just across the road from us and attended the local Uniting Church! We can quote many examples of friendship from the lending of bikes to baby sitting which have helped to make us feel welcome.

Although we all adjusted to the time difference very quickly, adjusting to the inverted seasons has proven more difficult. While making the transition from the snowfields of Sheffield to 30°C was easy, the prospect of Easter in the Autumn took more adjustment. New life and spring fit much more happily than the odd autumnal tree and shortening days.

This weekend we travelled about 3 hours (just round the corner by Oz standards) to an area called the Grampians (one of the many names which make us feel close to home). Again we were wowed by the landscape and wildlife, with dramatic rock faces, waterfalls and kangaroos on the back lawn. It's a cliché but we do have to keep pinching ourselves to check that we are really here and feel very privileged to have been given such a fantastic opportunity. We do however miss all our friends at Totley Rise and think and pray about you often. Thank you for your e-mails and cards.



Love  
*Alistair,*  
*Liz,*  
*Matt*  
*and Chris.*

# How we came to Totley Rise

Our previous church was very old and extremely traditional; the majority of the congregation are elderly and have fixed ideas of how people, specifically children, should behave. I have four sons and do my very best to teach them how to behave in church. They try very hard to behave appropriately but, being boys, they are noisy, active and easily bored. It was made clear to me that although we attended church every week (we were the only family to do so!!) my children were to be seen and not heard. The youngest was even frowned upon when he wanted to take the collection. One Sunday when an ex-vicar rudely told me that it wasn't fair that my children were there and we should go elsewhere, I decided we would indeed. I was hurt, feeling very bruised and raw and in need of love and support.

Two years previously I had taken my boys to *Journey Bethlehem*; they were welcomed and encouraged to join in the nativity play; people talked to us like we were friends. It made a big impact on me so after a quick search on the internet for advice on service times and Youth Church, with a friendly reply from Garry, I decided to give Totley Rise a go.

On arrival, we were greeted like long lost friends. We felt so welcome: a crèche for the baby, Youth Church for the older boys, and reassurances that they couldn't be too noisy or boisterous. We all look forward to church and can't wait until Sunday. Thank you to everyone who has made us all, so happy and so close to God.

*Bianca Drummond*

Editor's note. *What Bianca did not know until after she came was that we had been praying for families with children to join us. Specifically Ann Oles had prayed for 10-year old twin boys. Bianca's oldest boys are 10-year old twins!!*

## FOILING AIDS . . .

with cakes and plants, and coffee and books, and baking. No, it isn't a new holistic treatment for the disease but those involved *were* playing their part in defeating the effects of AIDS. The 50 or more people who came to the annual coffee morning at Peter and Phyl's house on 15 May defied the weather forecast (though it was better on the morning than forecast) and visited the garden through the occasional shower. Through the generosity of their purchases and gifts they enabled the FOIL AIDS charity to send £460 to the Hillcrest AIDS Centre near Durban. The Centre will use the funds to fight AIDS and its consequences in that part of South Africa. Many thanks to all who came and gave their support.

## Family News

Congratulations go to **Bruce and Jenny Dunsmore** on the birth on 8 April of **Abbigale Lauren**, another grandchild for **Josie and Ian**.

**Joan and Derek Cox** have a new grandson, **Charlie Joseph**, son of **Philip and Natalie**, born in Sydney on 20 April, and we send congratulations out to Australia to all concerned.

**Marilyn Costello** had another grandchild in May, **Thomas John**, a sister for Jess. Our very best wishes to her daughter Helen and the family.

On 5 April, TRM was pleased to welcome into the church family, **Rihannah Lily**, daughter of Jonathan and Sally Harvey, who was christened on that day.

*Alive!* has learned of the engagement on 29 March of **Peter Slegg and Christina Nelson** and their forthcoming marriage in Belfast in April next year, where Christina's family live - a happy event to look forward to for David and Lynda. Best wishes to them both!

All at TRM send best wishes to **David Wilson and Heidi Deans** on their forthcoming marriage in Hernhutt, Germany, on 5 July, and wish Mary and Alex a very happy day of celebration with them.

The Totley mole has also informed us of the impending 40th birthdays of both **Liz** (in June) and **Alistair Hinch** (in August). Matthew too will have celebrated his 10th birthday in May. The barbecue will surely be put to good use over the next few months! Happy Birthdays to you all!

Whilst writing of birthdays, we send congratulations to **Muriel Fairburn** who celebrated her 90th birthday on 19 May.

**Peter Holmes'** father, **Frank**, celebrated his 100th birthday on 3rd May, surrounded by all his family; a wonderful achievement, and congratulations go to him!

**Janet and Mick Savage** celebrated their Ruby Wedding in May whilst on holiday in Florida with some of the family. We congratulate them both.

# Youth Church

It is an exciting time in Youth Church as we can see the Lord moving in every aspect of children's work. Twelve months ago, we only had about six children in attendance on Sunday mornings - sometimes we had more leaders than children. Something had to be done, so we prayed, and prayed and prayed. Knowing that the Lord has his own time scale for making things happen can be very frustrating when you are impatient like me. One night, I decided to be very specific about our needs. Two families each with ten-year-old boys, plus any other children they might have would be just fine, I asked. On the first Sunday in January my prayers were answered. A family who had previously been to *Journey to Bethlehem* came to give our church a try. To my great delight they had twin ten-year-old boys plus two other super children. The Lord had been listening.

Sunday mornings are buzzing with an average attendance of 20, as more families come to join us. There were 14 children at the last *Toddler Praise*, the numbers in Youth Club have doubled, *Quest* is well attended and *Pushchair Club* is thriving.

The Lord is definitely at work here and we can't wait to see what is going to happen next.

By the way Lord, I don't want to be pushy, but I did ask for two families with twins, but I'll leave that with you!

## Quest – Update

Since you last heard from us we have celebrated Easter. As a part of our celebration we made Easter Egg Nests using chocolate and shredded wheat. Needless to say, the chocolate was a bigger temptation to resist eating than the shredded wheat!

At our second gathering we made Mosaic Plant Pots and then we planted seeds in them. By now there should be little pots of meadow flowers in homes around our community. We can grow as disciples of Jesus as we nourish ourselves by listening and talking to God and inviting Jesus to walk with us each day of our lives.

On Wednesday 1 July we are holding a Quest family barbecue with games, in the garden at TRM. We start at 5.30 and all are welcome. Looking ahead to the Autumn Term, we will be having a barbecue on Saturday 12 September as part of our gathering in weekend. Again there'll be games and food for all.

## Alpha or Omega ?

### Beginning or the End ?

*"I wanted to begin the spiritual journey . . . .my main memory was during the healing session when I experienced healing."*

*"In Alpha, God provided the sign I was looking for."  
"Cannot fault the course, all round brilliant."*

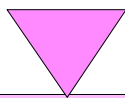


These were some of the comments made by the guests as they came to the end of the recent Alpha course. So was this really the end? Many wished it could continue, and not just for the food, as wonderful as it was. No, it was not the end; for many it was the beginning of something new and exciting and for others it was another piece of the jigsaw they had been compiling over a period of time. I would like to think the latter was so for the young man who just attended the morning session of the away day. Eight of the ten guests are now attending Garry and John's Fellowship group on Thursdays and have just started looking at the official follow up to Alpha – *A Life Worth Living*. Another beginning? Another step along the journey? Certainly not the end.

Once again a big thank you to everyone especially Garry, Viv, John (Stone) and Stuart for some excellent talks and to the Task Force for wonderful food and warm meeting and greeting.

So the church came to the end of its first Alpha course for some years - but again it is not the end for we are already thinking about the next Alpha course hopefully starting in September and finishing just in time for J2B. Keep a look out for more information as we will be asking you all again to ask a friend to 'come and see'.

# Don't miss these!



## **Buffet & Entertainment Evening Thursday 18 June 7.00 - 8.30 pm**

There will be a Buffet and Entertainment Evening held by the Youth Club to raise money for the orphanage in Uganda that Seb has links with. This will be an open-to-everyone evening and tickets will be available soon.

## **Comedy in the Pub Friday 26 June 8.00 pm**

Laughter with Andy Kind and Tony Vino at the Fleur de Lys Pub, Totley (see article page 2).

## **Lunch Break with Keith Tondeur**

### **Monday 29 June 12.00 - 2.00 pm**

Come and join us at TRM for lunch with Keith Tondeur, National Director of Credit Action. Keith will be sharing his expertise on:

#### **'Saying Goodbye to Debt and Better Money Management for Families'.**

Lunch will be served from 12.00-12.45, with finger food for children. A crèche is provided while we listen to our guest speaker.

More details from Dawn Dawson-Jones Tel: 2363157, or Margaret Stone Tel: 2361186.

## **Quest Family Barbecue**

### **Wednesday 1 July 5.30 pm**

(See details in 'Quest — Update' on page 6)

## **Fun in the Sun**

### **Sunday 5 July**

The Youth Church Noah Splash Family Fun Day is going to be on **Sunday 5 July**. Blow up slide, bouncy castle, paddling pools, a BBQ, fun and games in the church garden. Why not make a day of it: All Age worship at 10.30 am with a Bible Heroes theme, then bring a picnic lunch so that you don't miss any of the fun. We should finish about 3.30 - 4.00 pm. The sun has been booked so do come and join us. NB. Bring a change of clothes and a big towel, there is likely to be a lot of water- it is Noah Day after all!

# Events

*June 2009*

<b>Tue 2</b>	9.30 - 10 am	Prayer Meeting
	10 - 12 noon	Coffee Morning
	10 - 12 noon	Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM
	4.30 - 6.30 pm	Prayer in the Pub, at the Fleur de Lys
<b>Wed 3</b>	7.30 pm	Wednesday Friendship, The Samaritans, Isabel Blicow
<b>Thu 4</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm	Pushchair Club
	7.00 - 8.30 pm	Youth Club
<b>Sun 7</b>	9.00 am	Holy Communion, Garry Dawson-Jones
<b>Tue 9</b>	9.30 - 10 am	Prayer Meeting
	10 - 12 noon	Coffee Morning
	10 - 12 noon	Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM
	4.30 - 6.30 pm	Prayer in the Pub, at the Fleur de Lys
	8.00 pm	Tuesday Ladies, Work of a Children's Guardian, Margaret Webb
<b>Wed 10</b>	7.00 pm	Senior Citizens' Summer Outing
<b>Thu 11</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm	Pushchair Club
	7.00 - 8.30 pm	Youth Club
<b>Fri 12</b>	9.15 am	LEGO Walk
<b>Sun 14</b>	9.30 am	Toddler Praise
	6.30 pm	Open to God, at Totley All Saints
<b>Mon 15</b>	8.00 pm	Messianic Dance
<b>Tue 16</b>	9.30 - 10 am	Prayer Meeting
	10 - 12 noon	Coffee Morning
	10 - 12 noon	Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM
	4.30 - 6.30 pm	Prayer in the Pub, at the Fleur de Lys
<b>Wed 17</b>	7.30 pm	Wednesday Friendship, War Through the Eyes of a Child, Margaret Maxfield
<b>Thu 18</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm	Pushchair Club
	7.00 - 8.30 pm	Youth Club host a Buffet and Entertainment Evening (see 'Don't Miss These')
<b>Tue 23</b>	.30 - 10 am	Prayer Meeting
	10 - 12 noon	Coffee Morning
	10 - 12 noon	Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM
	4.30 - 6.30 pm	Prayer in the Pub, at the Fleur de Lys
	8.00 pm	Tuesday Ladies, Round walk and back to church for supper
<b>Thu 25</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm	Pushchair Club
	7.00 - 8.30 pm	Youth Club
<b>Fri 26</b>	8.00 pm	Comedy in the Pub (see page 2)
<b>Sun 28</b>	10.30 am	Keith Tondeur at TRM
<b>Mon 29</b>	12 - 2.00 pm	Lunch Break with Keith Tondeur (see 'Don't Miss These')
<b>Tue 30</b>	9.30 - 10 am	Prayer Meeting
	10 - 12 noon	Coffee Morning
	10 - 12 noon	Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM
	4.30 - 6.30 pm	Prayer in the Pub, at the Fleur de Lys

# Events

<i>July 2009</i>		<i>August 2009</i>	
<b>Wed 1</b>	5.30 pm Quest Family Barbecue 7.30 pm Wednesday Friendship, Tales of the Unexpected, <i>Lawrie Ginn</i>	<b>Sun 2</b>	9.00 am Holy Communion, Garry Dawson-Jones
<b>Thu 2</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club (Fire Engine Day) 7.00 - 8.30 pm Youth Club	<b>Tue 4</b>	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM
<b>Sun 5</b>	9.00 am Holy Communion, Rev Gordon Wilson 10.30 am All Age Worship, followed by Noah Splash Family Fun Day (see 'Don't Miss These')	<b>Thu 6</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club
<b>Tue 7</b>	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM	<b>Sun 9</b>	6.30 pm Open to God, Totley All Saints
<b>Thu 9</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club 7.00 - 8.30 pm Youth Club	<b>Tue 11</b>	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM
<b>Fri 10</b>	9.15 am LEGO Walk	<b>Thu 13</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club
<b>Sun 12</b>	9.30 am Toddler Praise 6.30 pm Open to God at TRM	<b>Fri 14</b>	9.15 am LEGO Walk
<b>Tue 14</b>	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM	<b>Tue 18</b>	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM
<b>Wed 15</b>	7.30 pm Wednesday Friendship, Sheffield's Link with Esteli, Nicaragua, <i>Charlie Withall</i>	<b>Thu 20</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club
<b>Thu 16</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club 7.00 - 8.30 pm Youth Club	<b>Tue 25</b>	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM
<b>Tue 21</b>	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM	<b>Thu 27</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club
<b>Thu 23</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club No Youth Club		
<b>Tue 28</b>	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM		
<b>Thu 30</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club No Youth Club		

### PRAYER IN THE PUB AT THE FLEUR DE LYS

This is likely to continue as usual from 4.30 to 6.30 pm every Tuesday during both July and August, but at the time of publication not all dates are absolutely certain owing to the holiday period.



### LOOKING AHEAD

On **Saturday 12 September at 4.00 pm**, we will be having a church family barbecue with games in the garden for all to enjoy. On **Sunday 13 September**, we will be joined for our Sunday morning 'Gathering In' service by **Steve Macbeth of Tricks for Truth**. Steve will be leading and speaking at our Church Family Celebration at 10.30 am - come along and bring your family and friends.

### *Sundays at TRM*

Sunday Services are at 10.30 am and 6.30 pm  
The first Sunday of each month is All Age Worship at 10.30 am