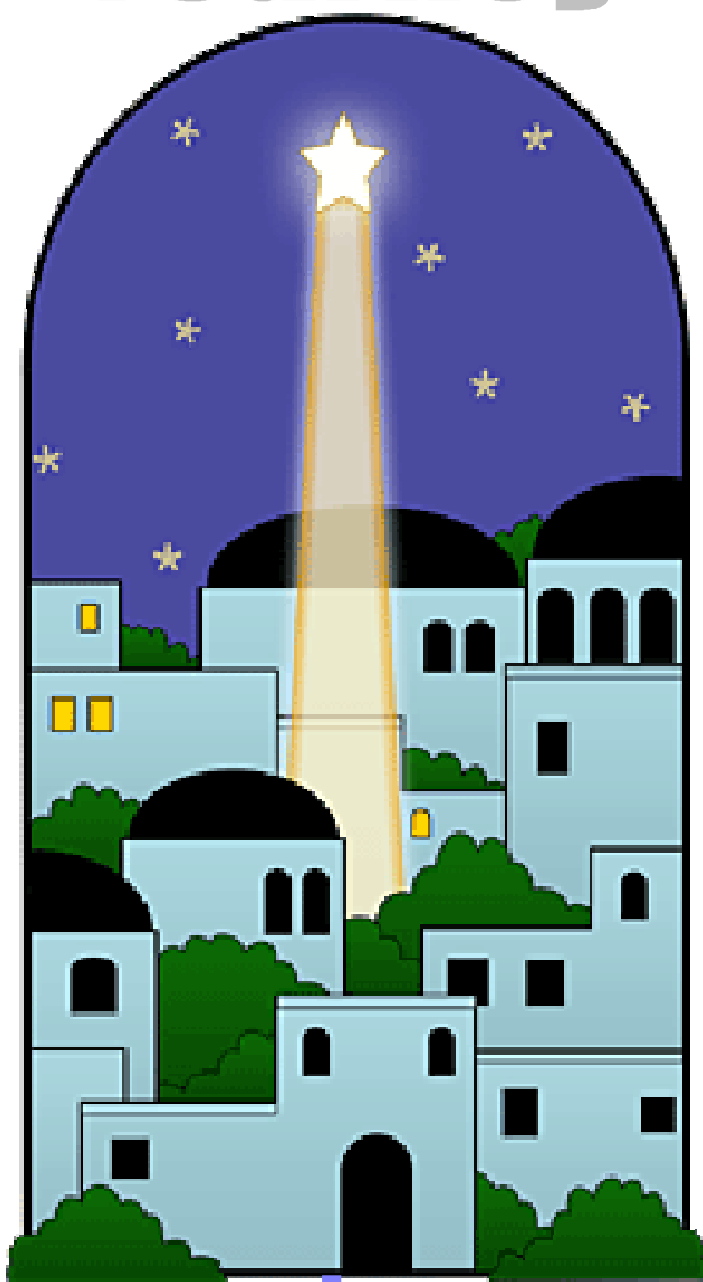


Alive!

News from
Totley Rise
Methodist Church

Nov 07 - Jan 08

Journey



to Bethlehem

As summer ends and the nights draw in, strange noises can be heard coming from the sheds and garages of Totley, Dore and Bradway, as preparations once again begin to create Bethlehem in Totley! Although this will be the fifth year we have invited people to *Journey to Bethlehem*, delivering this sound and light spectacular still requires a great deal of preparation. The work starts with the dusting off of the costumes and the performing of a few running repairs. The script is revised to build on the previous year and the budding thespians of Totley Rise once again prepare themselves to play a part. Preparation for the market-place starts early with the assembly of various materials to make pots, slippers and rope, with the ovens of S17 being called into action closer to the time to produce all sorts of tasty breads and sweets. The biggest task of all, however,

*Can we build it?
Yes we can!*

is on the day before the first visitors make their journey. The assembly of the sets, which provide the backdrop to the journey, is a Herculean task which sees market stalls assembled around a well, palm trees planted and miles of Hessian sacking hung, as the church is transformed into Bethlehem.

In case this description of preparations has failed to convey the magnitude of this event, then just imagine yourself being guided through Bethlehem by a Roman Centurion on the first Christmas and you will start to get an idea of what awaits you at *Journey to Bethlehem*.

If you would like to see the results of all this hard labour, be it for the first time or the fifth, then a *Journey to Bethlehem* will be taking place on **Friday 7 December (7.00 to 9.00 pm)** and **Saturday and Sunday 8/9 December (4.30 to 7.30 pm)**. Tours take about half an hour.

You can reserve your tour by calling
Gaynor Wilkinson on 0114 2368726



Restoring the Wonder

Dear Friends,

It's only the second week in October and already many shops are stocked with Christmas cards, hampers and gifts. Christmas preparations seem to start earlier and earlier. No sooner is the pressure of one Christmas off than another starts. Christmas is a time for great joy and celebration, of taking time to stop and reflect on the wonder and mystery of Immanuel – God with us.

That sense of joy, celebration, wonder and mystery can be squeezed out of Christmas because the pressure to get everything done is too great. A Mori poll suggesting that there are 3 million family rows each Christmas reflects this pressure. Suicide rates go up, marriages fall apart. When I think about these things it raises the question, 'What have we done to Christmas?' The sense of wonder about the central event in the history of the earth, the very thing that Christmas is about, progressively fades away and the joy, celebration, mystery and wonder is hidden.

So how do we restore the wonder of Christmas? Firstly, recognise that the pressure to be perfect and provide a perfect Christmas is unrealistic.

Secondly, take time to stop and think for a moment about this universe transforming moment when God became man as *the Word became flesh and dwelt among us*. Think how an ordinary young woman felt as she was told by God that she was going to be in on the greatest rescue mission the world has ever known. Think about the shepherds going about their business and how God interacts with them through an angelic visitation speaking words of joy and peace for all people. Think about how God in Christ swoops down from heaven and is born in a mundane place, leaving the security of his heavenly home, to make his home with us.

Finally, as we sing 'O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray; cast out our sin, and enter in; be born in us today! We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell; O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!' make the familiar words of this carol our prayer. So we know Immanuel – God with us restores the wonder, not just of Christmas, but of life. May we wish you a joyous and peaceful Christmas full of wonder.

With love and every blessing,

Rev Garry Dawson-Jones

It's Great to be Young!

Young people in Dore and Totley are back in action after the summer break. What has been happening since *Soul Survivor* in August?

Steelroots Youth Community – the community of young people in S17, headed up by Seb Allwright (TRM) and other youth workers in S17 continues to grow. The *Goldmine* (youth church held at Dore Methodist from 6-8 pm), is now twice a month instead of once a month. It is followed by smaller groups; D'Brief (for year 6 – 9) and fish.com (year 9-13) from 8-9 pm. On the other Sundays D'Café (a longer D'brief) and fish.com are held at All Saints and Dore Village hall (The Ark) from 6-8 pm. Through these events the youth community is growing closer together as we also grow together in our relationships with God.

The ARK Event was held on the 6 October. This was a great success with a lot of year 6's – year 8's coming together. *Golddigger* performed brilliantly; there was break dancing, messy games and a bit of a disco. A great night was had by all.

The main event of the year, *Steelroots* Houseparty, is from 29 October until 2 November! 5 days at Edale with loads of fun as well as great worship and talks, as we seek to delve deeper into living as a Christian today by looking at some of the key themes from the early chapters of Acts.

TRM's firework night is on 5 November at 6.30 so bring your fireworks along and let's have a good time together!

If you want to know more about anything that's going on for young people in S17, please speak to Seb.

Cakes for Commuters

What are you like at 6.45 on a dark damp October morning when waiting for a train to take you to work? Not at your best? No one is! So TRM decided to brighten up the mornings for the weary commuters.

On the mornings of the second week in October we were at Dore Station giving out free juice and muffins until 8.30. Trains go both to Sheffield and to Manchester from Dore station at that time and a surprisingly large number of people use them. Some people leave it to the last minute – no time for refreshments, and we were able to delay one train to get a late passenger on board.

On the first day we gave out about 100 beakers of juice and 46 muffins and the numbers rose during the week as people got used to us. The muffins and juice were also given to the guards and train drivers – all this was part of the outreach activities from all the churches in Dore and Totley to share God's love.

Later in the week one commuter wrote to express her thanks and say how much being offered juice and muffins by a smiling face had brightened her day. Others told us how much the effort had been a topic of conversation on the train.

Ikhaya Lobomi extends its work

During the summer Peter and Pauline Dibben visited the Ikhaya Lobomi project in South Africa. This project is working with AIDS patients and their relatives and is supported by our local FOIL AIDS charity. Because of our support they have been able to get other support in South Africa. Total, the petroleum company, has given about £20000 for fencing round their new hospice compound. Global laboratories has donated x-ray equipment. The hospice itself has been built with government funding but there will still be a shortfall for equipping the hospital. When operational the government will also give about £18 per patient per day.

Unfortunately they have been let down by the builders who failed to complete the new hospice even after being given an extension of time. New builders are being appointed to complete the work. In the meantime more outpatients are being treated and new outposts created. There were 350 outpatients when Peter and Pauline were there.

The locally developed drug that they are using with HIV/AIDS patients is to go for trials next year since the results have been so positive in the patients currently being treated.

Patience and Zimele Mavata, who set up Ikhaya Lobomi, send their heartfelt thanks for all the support they are receiving through FOIL AIDS. Patience particularly is very stretched and has not been in perfect health. Because of increased funding they have been able to appoint administrators for

1.5 days a week. This relieves some of the burden but the demand for help is almost unlimited.



Events

<i>November 2007</i>		<i>December 2007</i>	
Thu 1	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club 7.00 - 8.30 pm Youth Club	Mon 3	8.00 pm Messianic Dance
Fri 2 & Sat 3	10.00 am to 4.00 pm Art Exhibition by Len Capper in TRM's Church Lounge	Tue 4	10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon NO Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM this week 7.30 pm Film & Fellowship Evening at Fred Cocking's
Mon 5	6.30 pm Church Firework Evening 8.00 pm Hebrew Dance - visiting American teacher	Wed 5	8.00 pm Carols by Candlelight
Tue 6	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM 7.30 pm Film & Fellowship Evening at Fred Cocking's	Thu 6	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club No Youth Club tonight
Thu 8	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club 7.00 - 8.30 pm Youth Club	Fri 7	7.00 - 9.00 pm Journey to Bethlehem
Fri 9	9.15 am LEGO Walk	Sat 8	4.30 - 7.30 pm Journey to Bethlehem
Sat 10	7.30 pm <i>Better than X-Factor</i> -Totley Talents Evening	Sun 9	10.30 am All Age Worship and Toy Service 4.30- 7.30 pm Journey to Bethlehem
Sun 11	9.15 am Toddler Praise Service	Mon 10	8.00 pm Church Prayer Group
Mon 12	8.00 pm Church Prayer Group	Tue 11	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM 8.00 pm Tuesday Ladies Christmas Buffet
Tue 13	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM 8.00 pm Tuesday Ladies - Visit to Theatre	Thu 13	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club Party 7.00 - 8.30 pm Youth Club Party
Thu 15	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club 7.00 - 8.30 pm Youth Club	Fri 14	9.15 am LEGO Christmas Walk and Lunch
Sat 17	10 - 12 noon NCH Coffee Morning	Sun 16	10.30 am Youth Church Christmas Service
Mon 19	8.00 pm Messianic Dance	Tue 18	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM
Tue 20	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM 7.30 pm Film & Fellowship Evening at Fred Cocking's	Thu 20	No Pushchair Club today No Youth Club tonight
Thu 22	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club 7.00 - 8.30 pm Youth Club	Sun 23	10.30 am Special Christmas Celebration 6.30 pm Reflect on Christmas
Mon 26	8.00 pm Church Prayer Group	Mon 24	4.00 pm Crib Service
Tue 27	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM 8.00 pm Tuesday Ladies - <i>Dr Rod Amos</i>	Tue 25	10.00 am Christmas Day Family Service
Thu 29	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club 7.00 - 8.30 pm Youth Club		

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

January 2008

Tue 1	No Prayer Meeting or Coffee Morning No Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM
Thu 3	No Pushchair Club today No Youth Club tonight
Sun 6	10.30 am Covenant Service
Tue 8	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM 7.30 pm Film & Fellowship Evening at Fred Cocking's
Thu 10	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club 7.00 - 8.30 pm Youth Club
Fri 11	9.15 am LEGO Walk
Tue 15	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM
Thu 17	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club 7.00 - 8.30 pm Youth Club
Tue 22	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM 7.30 pm Film & Fellowship Evening at Fred Cocking's
Thu 24	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club 7.00 - 8.30 pm Youth Club
Sat 26	7.00 pm Church Party
Tue 29	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM

Family News

Congratulations to **Dennis Hodder** who celebrated his 80th birthday in September and shared a cake with the church family.

The church family would like to wish **Paul Savage** a very happy future in his new flat when he moves on November 1.

Covenant Service

In January we will be sharing once again in our annual covenant service, a very special act of worship in the Methodist Church calendar, in which we celebrate the very special relationship into which God calls us as his people.

The idea of 'covenant' in the Bible is that of a committed and binding partnership between two parties. There are joys and privileges as well as responsibilities and obligations on both sides.

Amazing though it seems, this is precisely the kind of partnership that God wants to have with us and in our covenant service we are able to consider together something of what that means as we live out our lives from day to day.

'In this covenant God promises us new life in Christ. For our part we promise to live no longer for ourselves but for God.'

*'I will be your God
You will be my people'*

For me, the covenant service is always a very moving and meaningful occasion. It is a time to remember and give thanks for all God's goodness and love and to marvel at the commitment he makes to us through the offering of his Son and the giving of his Spirit. But it is also a time to reflect upon our part in the relationship, to consider our worship, our obedience, our whole way of living and to renew our commitment to Him, with all the many challenges that brings.

The New Year is often a time when people take stock of their lives and make new plans and resolutions for the coming year. I can think of no better way to begin 2008 than by taking stock of the life God offers to us in Christ and by planning and resolving with His help, to love and serve Him more faithfully than we have ever done before. The covenant service provides us with the opportunity to do just that.

Viv Thomas

Castleton Silver Band Concert

Those who ventured out to TRM church on a cold dark Thursday night in October were well rewarded with an excellent evening's entertainment provided by the Castleton Silver Band. The concert was in aid of the Bluebell Wood Children's hospice. The choir organised the event and a volunteer representative of the hospice, Alan Corbett, gave an outline of the reasons and needs to support such a venture. He was brief and informative, and gave a heart-warming insight into the ethos of the hospice. The building is paid for, but funds are urgently needed for the running costs.

The Castleton Silver Band, under the leadership of Brian Hazlehurst, entertained us with an evening



of stirring, uplifting and very enjoyable music from the brass band repertoire. Brian proved not only to be an able director of music but also a gifted raconteur, and the musical items were interspersed with some amusing anecdotes. The band's finale was a rousing medley of Sea

Songs finishing in true 'last night of the Proms' style with *Rule Britannia*. A collection was taken during the evening and raised £309 for the hospice.

Quiz Night

Those little grey cells were certainly put to the test for teams participating in the Foil Aids quiz night at the start of October. Dave Harvey had everybody scratching their heads as he posed questions on subjects ranging from simultaneous equations through to hits of the 80's.

Here is one of the questions under the theme of 'How good a European are you?' - Can you identify this building?



Various European flags also had to be identified and named.

An entertaining, informative and at some points baffling evening was had by all who attended and the sum of £185 was raised for the great work of the Foil Aids charity, which cares for Aids sufferers in South Africa.

No Pipe Dream

Those attending the Harvest celebration service at the start of October were greeted not by the usual collection of fruit, vegetables, dried goods and tins but several silver rivers running across the floor of the Church. The rivers were made up of coins collected by the Youth Church to support the development of clean water projects in India. The whole service was centred on water and included a bucket race between the Youth Church and the Brownies followed by a challenge to construct a pipeline through the congregation! Gary closed the service and 'wowed' us by mysteriously turning dirty water clear, and reminding us that Jesus died to clean away our sins. A total of over £200 was raised towards the supply of clean water in India. After their success in the water challenge the Brownies have had to develop a new badge of 'Pipeline Engineer'!

Don't Miss These!

Christmas Services

AUTUMN EXHIBITION OF WATERCOLOURS

Fri/Sat 2 and 3 November, 10 am to 4 pm

Originals and prints of Len Capper's work, and greetings cards on sale, in Totley Rise Methodist Church Lounge. Come, browse and have a coffee!



UP LIKE A ROCKET! Monday 5 November TRM Firework Party at 6.30 pm

There will be plenty of soup and hot dogs to keep you warm on a cold evening. Why not bring some friends along with you?

BETTER THAN X-FACTOR!

Saturday 10 November at 7.30 pm
Totley Talents Evening

Who can forget last year's evening with the stewardesses on *Flight to Paradise* showing us how to adopt the crash position, our own two Ronnies, the beautifully played serious music, our own 'Joyce Grenfell' primary school teacher and so on. There will be more home grown talent this year – including new acts as well as old favourites, so come to enjoy a really good entertaining evening. Tickets are £5 available beforehand and on the door and include refreshments. All proceeds go to FOIL AIDS.

NCH COFFEE MORNING

Saturday 17 November 10 am to 12 noon

NCH (National Children's Home) is one of the UK's leading children's charities and has strong links to the Methodist church.

NCH no longer provides children's homes but focuses instead on helping children who are the most vulnerable and most in need, through the many projects and services it runs.

NCH makes a real difference to children and young people's lives, but can only continue its invaluable work through fundraising and charitable giving.

To help support the work of NCH come to the coffee morning in the church hall on Saturday 17th November. There will also be lots of stalls; for example, bring and buy, cakes, toys and books to name but a few.

Wednesday 5 December at 8.00 pm

★ Carols by Candlelight

A traditional service of carols and readings led by the choir. This is the last time the choir will be singing with Joe Bowring as the conductor.

Sunday 9 December at 10.30 am

★ All Age Worship

Parade service and toy service with toys going to Bluebell Wood Children's Hospice (new toys only, any financial gifts will be given to the family service unit)

Sunday 16 December at 10.30 am

★ Youth Church Christmas Service

Sunday 23 December at 10.30 am

★ A Christmas Celebration

Sunday 23 December at 6.30 pm

★ Reflect on Christmas

led by Margaret and Roger Hoyle

Monday 24 December at 4.00 pm

★ Crib Service

Tuesday 25 December at 10.00 am

★ Family Christmas Celebration

Looking Ahead to 2008

Sunday 6 January at 10.30 am

Covenant Service

Saturday 26 January at 7.00 pm

Church Party

Sunday 3 February at 10.30 am

Chocolate Sunday

Saturday 26 April, 10 am to 4.00 pm

Church Away Day at Christ Church Fulwood, to be led by Rev Chris and Kathy Woods. More details to follow.

Returning to work or school after the summer holidays can often induce a feeling of malaise, but this was definitely not the case for those returning to Totley Rise after the summer break. All the colour and noise of the circus were present in the September family service as Roly the Clown took over the Church.

Roly started by taking us back to his first job as a court jester in Bethlehem and telling the story of Jesus' birth

Just Clowning Around



while simultaneously balancing a cup of water on a pole! He then moved back to the very start of the Bible with the story of Adam and Eve while juggling and balancing on the top of a large ball. Interwoven into his whole act were more one liners than the Simpson's, many throwing light on just how easy it is for religion to get between us and God.

All this though was just a warm up for the acrobatics that followed. The church family looked on with amazement as a series of metal tubes were erected to form a 2m high slack rope across the front of the church (a slack rope is like a tight rope only it isn't tight!). Roly called this his slack

rope of faith and proceeded to provide a graphic representation of how God is always with us through the ups and downs of life.

The whole service was fantastic entertainment for both young and old alike while providing a new insight and understanding into some very familiar Bible stories. As Roly challenged us all at the end of the service, 'Why not try the slack rope of Faith yourself; it's just a case of letting go!'

