

Alive!

News from
Totley Rise
Methodist Church

Feb/March 2009

Reducing 1,085 Carbon Footprints

Historically people used to go on pilgrimages. In these days of credit crunch and ecological awareness we think more carefully about when and where we travel. So, instead of going to Bethlehem this Christmas, 1085 people decided to let Bethlehem come to them at TRM church. The sixth annual *Journey to Bethlehem* attracted that many 'pilgrims' over the two nights. Travellers came from far and wide – Bolsover, Tideswell, Epworth, Derby, Nottingham, London, the North East as well as other parts of Sheffield – for all it was nearer than travelling to the Bethlehem in Israel.

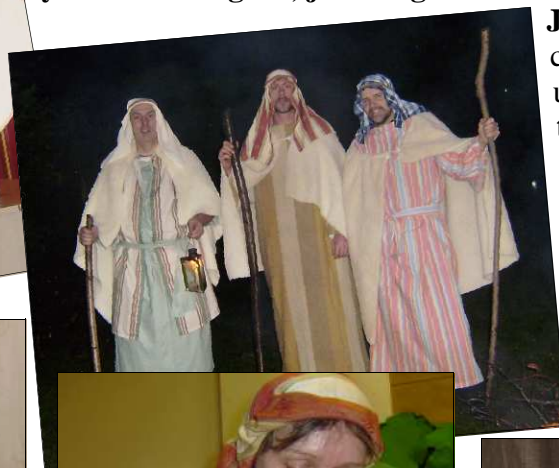
Shown round by one of six centurions they met a supporting cast of market traders, an inn keeper and his family, shepherds and their sheep, a census taker as well as the main characters of Isaiah, Elizabeth, Mary, Joseph and live babies – all specially imported to TRM for the occasion. They were entertained by Messianic dancing and refreshed by a team of servers from the kitchen. For over half the travellers this was their first journey to Bethlehem and there were many appreciative comments.

There was the factual, "We put the Christmas decorations up at the end of November, but Christmas doesn't start for us until *Journey to Bethlehem*", and the emotional, "So beautiful, very moving, thank you" and "Magical, just magical".



The children said they appreciated the market place and the games and "We didn't have to pay." One said, "I really enjoyed joining in the dancing. I'm going to practise for next year." Another said, "Our centurion was really good, but the innkeeper was very rude to him."

The most memorable quote was, "Mum, Jesus is real!" and many of the children said their favourite bit of the tour was "the baby Jesus". Many adults made comments which can be summed up as, "It's the best way of telling the Christmas story I've ever experienced." At least three people said they were moved to tears after their visit to the stable. For all it was an introduction to the real meaning of Christmas – God with us – and an opportunity to meet the God who came.



FAITHFUL GOD and CARING COMMUNITY

A recent TV broadcast followed four families who were on the brink of having their homes repossessed due to the financial climate and nervous banks foreclosing on mortgages/loans. It was heartbreaking to see distressed families face the impact on their young children of being turned out of their homes as bailiffs arrived.

You may wonder if we have been talked into a recession by our financial experts and politicians. Recession is a bad idea and the idea of recession has created fear in individuals and in financial institutions which seems to have become a self-fulfilling prophecy. The reality is, it has happened and the consequence is more fear and misery for thousands of people as they lose their jobs and homes.

This is a good time to remember God's promise of provision for our lives: 'Philippians 4:19 'And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus'. Many Christians will acknowledge the truth of that promise; it is something I have known in my own life. That same promise was something that George Müller knew during his life as the following story shows.

In one of Müller's orphanages things looked bleak for the children. It was time for breakfast, no food in the kitchen and no money in the account. Müller sat at the table with the children and prayed, "Dear Father, we thank thee for what thou art going to

give us to eat." Immediately, they heard a knock at the door. It was the local baker. "Mr Müller," he said, "I couldn't sleep last night. Somehow I felt you had no bread for breakfast, so I got up at two o'clock and baked fresh bread. Here it is." Müller thanked him and gave praise to God. Soon a second knock was heard. It was the milkman. His cart had broken down in front of the orphanage. He said he would like to give the milk to the children so he could empty the cart and repair it. Wow, that's a reminder of how God keeps his promise.

'And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus'

As a church our heart is to serve and care for the community. One way of doing that is to encourage people that God continues

to fulfil His promise. That same God can/will meet you at your point of need too. At TRM we seek to hold firm to God's promises and I would love to talk to you more about this. Finally, a reminder about practical help available through the Woodseats Advice sessions open to all in S17 every Tuesday morning from 10.00-12.00. Later in the year to complement the Woodseats Advice sessions, we hope to make available Money Coaching Courses as another practical resource.

As you go through what has been forecast as a difficult year ahead may you know the truth of God's promise.

Every blessing, *Garry Dawson-Jones*

Family News

Congratulations to **David Wilson** and **Heidi Deans** who became engaged in January. They are to be married on 4 July in Germany. Wonderful news for us all, and particularly Mary and Alex.

Wayne and Anne-Marie Hodgkins had a baby boy, **Ethan**, on 12 January. Our congratulations to them!

We would like to wish **Alistair and Liz, Matthew and Christopher Hinch** bon voyage as they travel to Australia

in February. They will stay for six months as Alistair takes up a post in Melbourne with the company for which he is currently employed. We will miss them all greatly, not least Alistair on the Alive! team! Our love, prayers and good wishes go with them.

Many Alive! readers will already know of the death in November '08 of **Ken Coldwell**, who had been ill for some time. We continue to remember Margaret and family in our prayers.

Christmas at TRM

Advent is an exciting time as we build up to the celebration of our Saviour's birth. This expectation and sense of excitement was definitely enhanced by the services and events that marked the lead up to the Christmas celebration at TRM.

Early in December the Wednesday Fellowship presented an enjoyable evening of carols and readings by candlelight. Journey to Bethlehem followed in the middle of December and signalled, to the over 1000 people who shared in this event, that Christmas had arrived and that we were about to celebrate the arrival of a baby who would change our lives.

The Sunday before Christmas provided an opportunity to celebrate Christmas in two very different ways. The morning service was lead by the youth church who, for the second year running, presented a specially commissioned drama telling the traditional Christmas story, but with a twist. This year's twist was the appearance of a scouse Angel resplendent in Liverpool FC shirt and red tinsel wings! The children provided a cast of various animals, angels and shepherds, not forgetting a young Mary and Joseph. The congregation also had a chance to show their talents by joining in the camel song. Yet again



Lewis Newman and Sheila Cooper provided a script which both entertained and provided a reminder of the heart of Christmas, while the children played their parts impeccably.

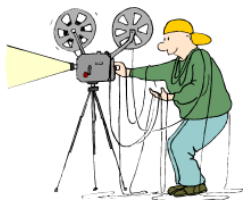


The evening service was a chance to meet up once again with some of the characters from Journey to Bethlehem, with some angelic additions. The angels told of their concern about the timing of Jesus' birth (would the hospitals be up to scratch!), while centurions quizzed the shepherds before hearing the good news from an angel. The service was enriched by a number of moving solos before Peter Holmes concluded the service by asking us to consider who is our Jesus - looking beyond the baby Jesus to the Jesus who challenges us to change our lives and follow Him.

On Christmas Eve the church was full with the sound of excited children as the last sleep before Christmas approached. Costumes were duly donned as a multitude of shepherds, angels and various animals gathered to celebrate the birth of a King. The Crib Service once again provided a colourful backdrop to Christmas with smiling happy faces and a series of readings telling of our Saviour's birth.



Finding God through Films



Seeing my son and his mother converted to the Christian life, I saw something I wanted too, and as the family became involved in the *Festival of Light* in 1970 organising rallies in Sheffield, this was put into practice.

Becoming founder members of the Christian Caravanners and Campers Fellowship over 30 years ago revealed to me joyful people sharing teaching rallies, experiencing testimonies, healing, and so much more about Christianity.

Photography being my hobby, I had a film library in the photographic department of my Pharmacy and started making Christian films applying the life to God's world through animals and nature, producing slide talks on 'Life' and 'Patterns in Nature' (i.e. how we change as we accept the Christian Life).

Retiring early at 50, I bought used Christian films to loan out as a personal mission. I travelled to London to seek an agency with International Films which was refused, so I then spent time at Christian World in Manchester viewing what was available from Gospel Films of America; visiting 'Light and Life' in Edinburgh helped to complete the Christian Film picture.

Purchasing videotapes on teaching, miracles and healing, missionary work, evangelism and cults, testimonies, Spring Harvest recordings, worldwide speakers, marriage, children's programmes and decent family feature secular viewing completed my gift I felt God leading me into, which was then advertised through schools, churches, etc throughout the country.

Viewing personally every film and videotape really helped me find God through this ministry. Also being able to hire out every kind of visual aid for projection, I was in the position to show films and talk to large audiences about the Christian Faith, (even 1000 campers in marquees at CCCF gatherings).

Today the Christian videotape library is at Cliff College, where I hope that my finding God through films may still influence other young people seeking their faith.

Fred Cocking



Traditionally the start of November provides cold and damp evenings and last year's November the 5th did not depart from this tradition. This, however, did not deter a large crowd from turning out to witness a fantastic display of light and sound as rockets, roman candles and various other pyrotechnic devices were sent whizzing and spinning into the air. Yet again Topley Rise's team of Firework magicians provided a fantastic display, in somewhat less than ideal conditions. The evening was not just limited to a visual and audio feast; sustenance was also provided in form of soup and hot dogs. These were delivered throughout the evening by a dedicated team to the grateful spectators. The quality of the provisions can be judged by the number of people returning for a second or even third helping!

God's Valentine

For God so loved the world
that He gave
His only
begotten
Son
That whoever
believes in Him
should not perish
but have everlasting life



Praying in the Pub

For some months now TRM and All Saints, Totley have been holding occasional joint evening services under the title *Open to God*. As a result of trying to hear what God is saying to us about meeting needs in the community, members of All Saints decided to venture out into offering prayer ministry to people outside the church premises. Many people would like prayer, but not all of them feel comfortable coming into a church. Some members of TRM and of Dore Parish church were also invited to join the prayer team.



After a trial run before Christmas with sessions in The Fleur de Lys and the Cross Scythes (with the active and helpful encouragement of both landlords) we have settled down now to being available every Tuesday from 4.30 to 6.30 at the Cross Scythes pub in Totley. The landlord has set aside a special area for us to meet people and pray with them. There was a slow start but, as we are getting better known, more people are starting to come. Individuals bring their own needs and teams of two people from the churches pray with them. This is not counselling, but it is prayer ministry where we expect and see God working in people's lives whilst we pray with them.

Some good stories are starting to come from these sessions but, because of confidentiality, we cannot give details here. Ask those who have been prayed with. If you know of anyone who would like to be prayed with – tell them. If you are a regular church attender, then please pray for those involved in this ministry that they will have the insight, wisdom, power and presence of the Spirit to deal with any problems that arise.

Sunday Mornings in Lent

As part of the review, TRM and the other local Methodist churches (the *Circuit*) will be having services with a common theme in Lent. The titles come from Robert Schnase's book *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations*.

- 1 March – Radical Hospitality
- 8 March – Passionate Worship
- 15 March – Intentional Faith Development
- 22 March – Risk Taking Mission & Service
- 29 March – Extravagant Generosity

Sunday 22 March is also Mother's Day. The Circuit Superintendent, Rev. Robert Lewis, will be taking the service on 15 March.

Watch, Pray and Watch

Would you like to see Totley Rise Church full of babies, toddlers and their families? We certainly would. We believe that our Toddler Praise services are what God wants us to be doing. Unfortunately, our former Toddlers are growing up and, at present, we haven't got many new ones to follow on. We believe the Lord is calling us to do a new thing and for this we need the help of the whole congregation.

It's very simple. We ask you to watch out for any young families that live in your road and pray for them. We also ask that you will give us the number of their house, so that we can give a specific invitation to come to our next Toddler Praise services. If you can deliver the invitation yourself, that would be great, but if not we will do it.

So, please, WATCH out for young families,
PRAY for them,
WATCH what God will do.

It's a great step of faith and a bit scary, but we feel we are being obedient to the Lord, so please support us.

Ann, Anne, Josie, Linda and Liz

God-centred Fun for the Young

During October half term 28 young people went out to Edale for 5 days of God-centred fun and mayhem – it was Houseparty 08. During the week we focused on discovering our spiritual gifts and our part in the kingdom of God. Alongside these times of worship, teaching and ministry we played lots of silly games, went to Romiley in our beach clothes to do some silly challenges and create tourist videos - to make Romiley famous! In the midst of all of this fun is community - a community of young people seeking God, a community of young people with a passion for Jesus and to see their worlds changed. We seek to be “a radically different community, encouraging each other and every young person in S17 to walk with God.” Houseparty is one way that we seek to see this vision come to fruition, as we take time out to hear

from God and be in His presence. He never disappoints, and this week was no exception.

Lots of other things are also happening; November saw the beginning of *Fresh*. *Fresh* is a worship event aimed at young people in year 6 to year 8. There are games, teaching, worship and plenty of time to get to know people and build a community. Alongside this, *Rock Solid*, also for year 6 to year 8, started on January 13.

You can expect to see a lot more of us over the coming weeks; *Steelroots* is going on tour around all the churches in S17 between February and April. We are looking forward to sharing with you all and worshipping together.

Seb Allwright

THE WEDNESDAY FRIENDSHIP - *What it means to me*

Ruth and I were married at Psalter Lane Methodist Church 40 years ago this year. We attended there for 20 years and were involved in the running of the *Get Together Society*, which met fortnightly, and invited speakers to cover a wide variety of topics, usually meeting in the comfortable lounge in Shirley House.

When we moved to Beauchief we transferred to TRM, where we have now been for 20 years! We soon became attracted to the *Wednesday Friendship*: a very similar group of dedicated people, meeting fortnightly for social, devotional and very informative topics.

In writing this article I browsed through the printed programmes for previous years. This proved quite nostalgic. Speakers

included: Jack Shaw, Dell Cook, Brian Edwards and Kim Goh; varied topics included Desert Island Discs, Antiques Roadshow, joint meetings with the United Nations Association to mark One World Week, and people talking about Israel, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, U.S.A., and Romania.

The two highlights for me each year are the *Easter Meditation* and the *Carols by Candlelight*. A major highlight for me was the visit to Oberammergau in 1990, organised by Peter and Jean Rawling and Don and Audrey Buchan, so Ruth and I decided to organise a similar visit for the Millennium in 2000. We spent the usual 2 nights in the village to attend the Passion Play, having earlier stayed in a most picturesque Austrian resort,

Oberndorf, with excursions into the surrounding countryside, and a memorable Tyrolean evening complete with the Schuhplattler dancers. Believe it or not, some of us have already booked to go to Oberammergau in 2010!

The Wednesday Friendship is open to all, young and old, and welcomes people from the neighbourhood to attend any or all our meetings. It is advertised in the *Totley Independent* as well as *Alive!*, and always includes a time for welcome and opening prayer and closes with refreshments. A warm invitation is offered to all to come along and meet with us - Wednesdays, fortnightly, from 7.30 to 9.30. - See you there!

Richard Lamb

What a Great Evening!

A large audience turned up for the *Totley Talents* evening and were well-entertained. Starting with a masterly performance of Tony Hancock's *The Blood Donor* by John Stone and others, the evening ended with our two Devon Locals (John Stone and Roger Hoyle) recounting the sad tale of Jan Pierce's grey mare in *Widdecombe Fair*. The audience joined in the chorus with gusto.

The youngest performer was Elisha Dearden who played three short solo flute pieces and the oldest was Len Capper who in his inimitable style gave us an old comedy routine and had us joining in singing some old country and western songs. The programme went from the serious music of Saint Saens and Brahms (played by Paul Birtwisle and Linda Wareham) to the humour of Bob Newhart and Joyce Grenfell (Peter Holmes and Judith Slack). Stan Chandler came in his kilt and was suitably Scottish. Sheila Cooper and Lewis Newman were wheeled on in prams for their *Baby Talk*. John Freeman told the story of *Sam's Christmas Pudding* (after some dubious nursery rhymes) and new talent Dean Duke's karaoke was worthy of any of the best of X factor.

A total of £521 was raised for the *FOIL AIDS* charity.

TOYBOXTOG SWAP

"Bring along your clothes and swap them with someone else" was the message we gave out one Sunday morning in church. We didn't mean this quite so literally!!

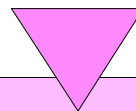
The Monday morning fellowship group had decided to raise money for the *Toybox* Children's Charity which helps street children in Latin America. *Toybox* works to bring hope to children who have none and strives to restore families and reach out to children living and working on the streets, providing them with choices and hope.

To do this we held a "tog swap" on 10 November. We invited people to bring along clothes, jewellery, handbags, children's clothes, books, games, etc that were in good condition but they no longer wanted. The idea was that they would look through what others had brought and go home with a whole new wardrobe!

People made a donation to *Toybox* for each item they took so that we could make a difference in these children's lives. Breakfast of coffee, muffins and croissants was provided, together with an area for the children to play in. We had a lovely relaxed morning and raised £102.

Many thanks to all who donated items and came to support this event. We hope to hold something similar again during 2009, so please start to plan your new wardrobe now!!

Don't miss these!



Quiz Night

Banish the winter blues and get into Spring by coming to the **FOIL AIDS Quiz Night on Friday 13 March at 7.30 pm**. These nights are always great fun. You can book in teams of four or come on your own and be put in a team on the night. Tickets are £3 per person and can be obtained from Peter and Phyl Holmes, Dave Harvey, Adrian Shipley or Peter and Pauline Dibben – or you can pay on the night.

You can also take the opportunity of stocking up your reading for Easter and the holidays from the bookstall. All proceeds go to the **FOIL AIDS** charity.

Looking Ahead

We are planning to host a comedy night in one of the local pubs some time in March or April to bring a little cheer to people. Date to be confirmed later.

The next **S17 Service** is at King Ecgbert's School on **17 May** at 10.30, and we'll know some time in February if the new Bishop of Sheffield will accept our invitation for him to come and preach.

On **June 28** we hope to have a speaker from Christians Against Poverty who will help us to explore further Money Coaching Courses and other financial issues.

Events

February 2009			March 2009		
Sun 1	9.00 am	Holy Communion - Rev Garry Dawson-Jones	Sun 1	9.00 am	Holy Communion - Rev Gordon Wilson
Mon 2	7.00 pm 8.00 pm	Alpha Course Messianic Dancing	Mon 2	7.00 pm 8.00 pm	Alpha Course Messianic Dancing
Tue 3	9.30 - 10 am 10 - 12 noon 10 - 12 noon 4.30 - 6.30 pm	Prayer Meeting Coffee Morning Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM Prayers in the Pub, at Cross Scythes	Tue 3	9.30 - 10 am 10 - 12 noon 10 - 12 noon 4.30 - 6.30 pm	Prayer Meeting Coffee Morning Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM Prayers in the Pub, at Cross Scythes
Thu 5	1.30 - 3.00 pm 7.00 - 8.30 pm	Pushchair Club Youth Club	Thu 5	7.30 pm 7.00 - 8.30 pm	Pushchair Club Youth Club
Sun 8	9.30 am 6.30 pm	Toddler Praise Open to God at Totley All Saints	Sun 8	9.30 am 6.30 pm	Toddler Praise Open to God at TRM
Mon 9	7.00 pm	Alpha Course	Mon 9	7.00 pm	Alpha Course
Tue 10	9.30 - 10 am 10 - 12 noon 10 - 12 noon 4.30 - 6.30 pm	Prayer Meeting Coffee Morning Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM Prayers in the Pub, at Cross Scythes Tuesday Ladies visit to Ecclesall Theatre	Tue 10	9.30 - 10 am 10 - 12 noon 10 - 12 noon 4.30 - 6.30 pm 8.00 pm	Prayer Meeting Coffee Morning Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM Prayers in the Pub, at Cross Scythes Tuesday Ladies, - Nepal, <i>Sheila Cooper</i>
Wed 11	5.30 - 6.30 pm	Quest	Wed 11	5.30 - 6.30 pm	Quest
Thu 12	1.30 - 3.00 pm 7.00 - 8.30 pm	Pushchair Club Youth Club	Thu 12	1.30 - 3.00 pm 7.00 - 8.30 pm	Pushchair Club Youth Club
Fri 13	9.15 am	LEGO Walk	Fri 13	9.15 am 7.30 pm	LEGO Walk Foil Aids Quiz Night
Mon 16	7.00 pm 8.00 pm	Alpha Course Messianic Dancing	Mon 16	7.00 pm 8.00 pm	Alpha Course Messianic Dancing
Tue 17	9.30 - 10 am 10 - 12 noon 10 - 12 noon 4.30 - 6.30 pm	Prayer Meeting Coffee Morning Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM Prayers in the Pub, at Cross Scythes	Tue 17	9.30 - 10 am 10 - 12 noon 10 - 12 noon 4.30 - 6.30 pm	Prayer Meeting Coffee Morning Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM Prayers in the Pub, at Cross Scythes
Thu 19	1.30 - 3.00 pm	Pushchair Club No Youth Club	Thu 19	7.30 pm 7.00 - 8.30 pm	Pushchair Club Youth Club
Mon 23	7.00 pm	Alpha Course	Mon 23	7.00 pm	Alpha Course
Tue 24	9.30 - 10 am 10 - 12 noon 10 - 12 noon 4.30 - 6.30 pm 8.00 pm	Prayer Meeting Coffee Morning Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM Prayers in the Pub, at Cross Scythes Tuesday Ladies -The History of Manor Lodge, <i>David Templeman</i>	Tue 24	9.30 - 10 am 10 - 12 noon 10 - 12 noon 4.30 - 6.30 pm 8.00 pm	Prayer Meeting Coffee Morning Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM Prayers in the Pub, at Cross Scythes Tuesday Ladies - Water Water Everywhere, <i>John Doornkamp</i>
Wed 25	5.30 - 6.30 pm	Quest	Thu 26	7.30 pm 7.00 - 8.30 pm	Pushchair Club Youth Club
Thu 26	1.30 - 3.00 pm 7.00 - 8.30 pm	Pushchair Club Youth Club	Mon 30	7.00 pm	Alpha Course
			Tue 31	9.30 - 10 am 10 - 12 noon 10 - 12 noon 4.30 - 6.30 pm	Prayer Meeting Coffee Morning Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM Prayers in the Pub, at Cross Scythes

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
The Toddler Praise Services are at 9.30 am.

