

At the moment my mind is full of questions. Why does it always rain on bonfire night? Why is the new Rooney named after a wardrobe from Ikea? and why, each year, do we allow the Xfactor winners single to occupy the number one spot in the charts? Does anyone else miss proper Christmas songs being at the top of the charts each year? Ok I'll admit some of them were pretty rubbish but at least there was some variety. We had such classics as 'Merry Christmas Everybody' by Slade in 1973, 'Mary's boy Child' by Boney M in 1978 and 'Do they Know it's Christmas' by various incarnations of Band Aid in 1984, 1989 and 2004. Actually my two favourite Christmas songs were kept off the top spot. 'The Fairytale of New York' by The Pogues, despite regularly being voted the best Christmas song of all time, missed out on a number one to 'Always on my Mind' by the Pet shop boys in 1987. The other was the fastest and biggest selling single in December not to be a Christmas number one when it was piped by the original 1984 version of 'Do they know it Christmas.' The song was called 'The Power of Love' by Frankie goes to Hollywood and encouraged people to 'make love your goal'. Recently alot of the talking I've done in our church services has been about helping people to see God's love all around them and then helping others to see it too. There's quite a few ways that the churches in this area are working on that at the moment. One that I'm particularly involved in is the new Pub fellowship group that's meeting in the Lord Darcy on Harrogate Road to talk about what God means to us and enjoy a drink together. Another is the new 'Drop in' group for teenagers that we will soon be starting at Alwoodley Park Methodist Church. I hope that both of these will help our churches to be more visible in the communities that we love. So 'Merry Christmas everybody', I hope that you're not 'Lonely this Christmas', you enjoy remembering 'When a Child is Born', celebrate with 'Mistletoe and Wine' and remember 'There's no one quite like Grandma!'

Graeme

CHILDREN'S TIME ON SUNDAY at the Methodist Church. Currently our children are aged from 1 year upwards and they have lots of fun learning about Jesus. They join in with our 10.45am service for a short time and then they go into their own room, with their parents if they want to join them. THE LITTLE ONE(S) would be very welcome, just come along to the service at 10.45 and join in. Simple as that.

Christmas Carols at the Avenue – Bottom shops. Every body welcome to sing along with us on Saturday 19th December at 11.00am and raise money for charities caring for the homeless in Leeds.



CHURCHES TOGETHER IN MOORTOWN AND SHADWELL invite you to join them for Carol Singing at Sainsbury's from 5.30pm to 7pm on Tuesday 22nd December. Collection to go to the Children's Society

WRITE DOWN THIS TELEPHONE NUMBER

0113 2484288 WHY because it is the number for EMMAUS based in Leeds 9 (a charity which supports and trains homeless people) and when your cupboards are stuffed after Christmas and you need to have a clear out they are able to accept donations of good quality furniture, clothes, bric a brac and small electrical items. www.emmaus.org.uk/leeds



MHA (Methodist Homes for the

Aged) This organization which was established 65 years ago and now delivers a range of services to over 12,500 individuals: 3,000 older people in residential, nursing and specialist dementia care homes, 1,500 older people in sheltered housing and 8,000 older people on community projects. 5, 000 staff work for the MHA and they are supported by 5,000 loyal volunteers. The nearest MHA is Yew Tree Court at Cranmer Bank? For more information log on www.mha.org.uk



ACTION FOR CHILDREN (FORMERLY NATIONAL CHILD HOME)



Action for Children (founded by Methodists) is committed to helping the most vulnerable children and young people in the UK break through injustice, deprivation and inequality, so that they can achieve their full potential. All children and young people have unique potential and they are given the support and opportunities they need to reach it for as long as it takes to transform the lives of the most vulnerable. Today Action for Children is the leading UK provider of family and community centres, children's services in rural areas, services for disabled children and their families as well as services for young people leaving care. Alwoodley Park Methodist's Christmas Day Offering will be donated to this worthy cause.



The Mixed voices Concert held at St Stephen's Church on September 12th raised £1,127.70 for MARC Group (Mesothelioma and Related Concerns) who thank everyone concerned for their support.

"Encouragers" is a group of children leading worship in song and movement their way. The name comes from the fact that our patron saint, St. Barnabas, was nicknamed The



Encourager. The kids role is to help and encourage the whole congregation to join in and enjoy worshipping God together. The way children and young people worship is a gift to the whole church. It needn't be confined to childrens' groups and family services. It's important to keep it from becoming a performance and the best way adults in the congregation can do that is to join in instead of just watching. The younger ones start off by putting the actions to the songs and progress to using movement in worship creatively in their teens. In Encouragers everyone's ideas are welcomed and given a try, there is a lot more freedom to experiment in this way during rehearsals. Unfortunately the main church doesn't often see the best bits on a Sunday, but as a result of what we have been doing at rehearsals, some of the teenagers are now leading worship in church. The younger ones seem to have more of an appetite for movement than using their voices but, by regularly giving them the opportunity to lead the songs they love, some lovely natural voices have developed. Singing is such an important means of expressing our worship, both individually and in groups. Encouragers' rehearsals are often rushed and chaotic but the children are rewarded with sweets, star charts and prizes as a thank you for their commitment, energy and the snippets of news they bring with them. For more information contact Sarah Wright on 0113 2669825.



Connect



A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

St Barnabas Church
The View, Leeds 17
Rev'd Nigel Beer.
Tel No 0113 2678487



ST BARNABAS' SERVICES

Sunday 20th December

9.15am Holy Communion

11.00am Holy Communion

6.30pm Carols by Candlelight

Thursday 24th December

Christmas Eve

4.00pm Children's Christmas Service

11.30pm Midnight Communion

Friday 25th December

Christmas Day

10.00am Holy Communion Service



Alwoodley Park Methodist Church
The Avenue, Leeds 17
Rev'd. Graeme Dutton.
Tel. No 0113 2683512

CHRISTMAS SERVICES AT THE METHODIST CHURCH

Sunday 13TH 10.45 am Christmas Words, Poetry, Drama and Carols C

Sunday 20TH 10.45 am Traditional Carol Service

Christmas Eve 11.30PM Service with Holy Communion at Midnight

Christmas Day 11.00am Family Service



ECKERSLEY HOUSE is the Charity that we are supporting this year at Alwoodley Park Methodist Church. It is run by the SICK CHILDRENN'S TRUST and they need to raise £1.8 million to move to new accommodation at the LGI. In January we are having a themed social evening with a TAPAS supper and all proceeds will be given to Eckersley House. Tickets available, ring Christine (as above).

What does 'church' look like? A building where people meet to sing hymns and pray? On one level, that answer has been accurate and to some extent it still is. But the style and form of services isn't always what you might expect. Recently at St Barnabas' people have had the opportunity to experience two quite different services.

The first was led by younger members of church, mainly in their teens, who talked about their experiences in the summer at "Soul Survivor". Soul Survivor is a gathering of thousands of young people from all over the country who meet to worship God and to learn more about their faith and how to live as a Christian today.

One difference in terms of approach was that we sat around tables, rather than being in rows of chairs, and refreshments were available throughout the service. This informal and relaxed approach enabled people to chat and share together. The message the young people wanted to share in this service – love God, love your church and love your community!

The second different service was one shared with the members of Alwoodley Park Methodist Church. This drew on the approach to worship developed by the Taize Christian community in France. The Taize community is made up of people from all over Europe and across the world. Some people visit for a short time, others stay much longer. It is a place where barriers are broken down and where people encounter Jesus in a new way. It is known for its inspiring worship – many 'simple' songs of praise have been written by members of the community.

We didn't do things totally the Taize way – we sat on chairs, not the floor, and the songs were sung in English, not Latin. But it was good to be reminded that worship of God isn't something that happens in just one way, but there is much to learn and experience from others who share a journey of faith in Jesus.
Nigel



CHRISTINGLE SERVICE Sunday 13th December

the ACA from 4pm. Come along to this truly family service and get your Christmas off to good start. Come early, last year the Community Hall was soon full. There will be a collection for the Children's Society.



As part of their commitment to Fairtrade, Year 6 pupils and accompanying staff from Allerton Cof E Primary school enjoyed a hearty lunchtime snack at the Fairtrade café held at Alwoodley Park Methodist Church on Tuesday 10th November which made £232. 23 for Fairtrade



SOMETHING FOR ADULTS

NIGHT 16 is a small social group who meet at the Methodist Church (usually on the 16th of each month) to visit gardens, go to the theatre or out for a meal at Christmas and also have activity evenings such as speakers and quizzes in our church hall followed by supper. Everyone is welcome and lifts can be arranged for those who feel shy of arriving alone. Ring Christine and mention Night 16 (2680266)

Prepare! 2009 Get ready to celebrate Christmas together at St B' Church Hall from 3:30 – 6:00pm on Sunday 29th November 2009



Come and write cards and wrap gifts in good, relaxed company with seasonal refreshments.. £2 Entry includes free glass of mulled wine/tea/coffee/chocolate/ juice and mince pie or shortbread. Tickets on door or in advance. Call 0113 2669825.

ALL BALLROOM DANCERS are invited to a special Christmas Tea/Coffee Dance at St Barnabas Church Hall from 10.30am to noon on Thursday 10th December. Everyone welcome, no need to dance.



Table Top Sale - Saturday December 5th 10.30 - 12.30

This is the next fund raising event for the hall refurbishment. Lots of good quality new and used goods on sale. Any queries, ring Jenny (2817100)