

# Pershore Baptist Church



**Broad Street, Pershore, Worcestershire  
December 2008**

# Messenger

[www.pershorebaptist.org](http://www.pershorebaptist.org)

## Christmas Services

### Baptist Church

Sunday 21st December	10.30am	Family Carol Service
Sunday 21st December	from 6.00pm 6.30pm	Festive light refreshments Christingle Carol Service

**Christmas Day**      **10.30am**      **Morning Worship**

Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> December	10.30am	Family Worship
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#### More Information

- The **Family Carol Service** will include festive items from Junior Church
- The **Christingle Carol Service** is a moving carol service with readings, led by members of our church family.
- The **Christmas Morning** service is a short family service celebrating the Saviour's Birth





## Christmas Services

### The Abbey

Sunday 21st December	5.00pm	Nine lessons and carols
Christmas Eve	3.30pm	Crib and Christingle service
	11.45pm	Midnight Eucharist
Christmas Day	8.00am	Eucharist
	10.30am	Eucharist

### Holy Redeemer

Christmas Eve	6.30pm	Children's Mass
	11.00pm	Midnight Mass
Christmas Day	10.00am	Mass

Minister Rev Mark Jennings  
01386 556088 e-mail: minister@pershorebaptist.org

### Dear Friends

Workmen have been industriously busy, hanging precariously, from impressive hydraulic platforms in Broad Street erecting the Pershore 'Tree of Lights' which will, I'm sure, brighten both the atmosphere of the Town by its colourfully festive illumination and the lives of many through the generosity of those sponsoring a light in support of two local charities, namely Worcester Young Carers and Acorns Hospice. It will serve too as a focal point of remembrance for many who, by sponsoring a light, will honour a loved one.

Tradition credits Saint Boniface with the invention of the Christmas tree. We are told that the Oak of Thor was chopped down by Boniface in a stage-managed confrontation with the old gods and local heathen tribes. A fir tree growing in the roots of the Oak was claimed by Boniface as a new symbol. "This humble tree's wood is used to build your homes: let Christ be at the centre of your households. Its leaves remain evergreen in the darkest days: let Christ be your constant light. Its boughs reach out to embrace and its top points to heaven: let Christ be your Comfort and Guide." The modern custom of adorning Christmas Trees can be traced back to 16th century Germany although it didn't come into popular use in Britain until the mid nineteenth century when ties between Germany and Britain were cemented through the marriage of Queen Victoria to

Prince Albert and ordinary folks began to emulate the customs of the Royal Family. Without question, the Christmas tree is now one of the most readily identifiable symbols of the modern festive season.

Yet, this, along with many other Christmas trimmings begs a question or two. How do we make Christmas joyously special without it becoming either sentimentally pagan or sadly just too stressfully commercial? I am convinced that we who share the deepest treasures of the faith of Christmas are not required to deny ourselves Christmas fun. Our challenge is to find and show the way to a holy and happy celebration of the season. We are, by the Spirit of Christ, invited to be creative, compassionate and caring in our celebration of the Saviour's birth. Sadly, I've encountered many victims of "sanctified Scroogism" and I'm sure you have too. Sure, the silly, superficial and senseless surround us everywhere during the holidays but maybe we, with a sanctified imagination, can make a small difference and embody something of the desire of the Father's heart for the wellbeing of humanity shown supremely in Jesus Christ.

Santa himself is a case study in how we may use cultural traditions to serve spiritual objectives. Whatever arguments are mustered against a commercialized Christmas anchored in a secular Santa, I still like the old guy. Santa Claus is derived from a real Saint Nicholas. A shy, kindly man, he wanted to give generously to the poor without being noticed and decided, among other methods, to

drop charitable items down unsuspecting but presumably unlit chimneys. He is now a dramatic emblem for a world crying out for a larger-than-life daddy who will love his kids even when they are not perfect and give them gifts to fulfill their longings. He's called "Father Christmas" in the Commonwealth nations; and at the holiday season, most of this planet softens up to acknowledge its need of someone like him. Of course, that Someone is the real Father of Christmas "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" who perfectly supplies the full answer to humankind's universal longing for a loving and giving father: "For God so loved the world that He gave....."

I'm convinced that traditions can be applied without allowing world-mindedness to clutter our celebrating. Perhaps one way is to turn the Christmas tree into a testimony of Jesus. We can draw spiritual lessons from the elements composing the Christmas tree. We might say 'This Christmastime, we're worshipping Jesus in an atmosphere that reminds us of the many blessings Father God intended for us when He sent His Son. This lovely tree, surrounded by packages, for example, ought to speak of something far more than human giving. This tree in its verdant freshness is a living testimony of another tree - the cross of Calvary. That cross was the first Christmas tree, where our dying Saviour was hung to bring God's gift of salvation to us.' 'Through His rising from the dead, Jesus' life has burst through the deadness of our world. And this green tree around which we gather breathes of the

life Jesus Christ is ready to give us today. Around the base of a tree are often laid many gifts. This may be an eloquent statement of the Holy Spirit's readiness to give gifts of grace, healing, strength, provision and more. All these blessings are released to us because of the ultimate gift God had given us in Jesus the first and greatest present ever placed on a tree. The creativity of a child's insight into truth will abound when given opportunity. Jesus is 'the bright and morning star," one child may note "and the star on the tree-top reminds us of that." Decorative snow on the branches may bring the observation, "Because of the cross, our sins are washed as white as snow." The ornaments have different messages, depending upon their appearance, but all say, "God has decorated our lives" with many beautiful things through the grace of our Lord Jesus. The lights radiate the testimony, "Jesus is the Light of the World." I'm sure you get the idea.

And in that light, I long that we each allow, experience and share many such blessings this Christmas. My first Christmas prayer echoes the words of Boniface 'Let Christ be at the centre of our households ... let Christ be our constant light ... let Christ be our Comfort and Guide." May the truth of Christmas become a liberating one, filled with the warmth of the Father's family love and overflowing with the joy of Jesus, spreading a holy contagion over everything. May the Holy Spirit help us prophesy like Zacharias, give like the wise men, shout like the angels and sing and magnify the Lord like Mary. Wishing you a blessed Christmas and a peace-filled New Year.

Mark



## Weekly Church Events

Sundays	
10.30am	Family service with Sunday School Communion 3rd Sundays
5.00pm (6.00pm in summer)	Evening Worship Communion 1st Sundays
Mondays	
1.30pm	Little Fishes playgroup
7.30pm	House Group Middle Lane, Cropthorne
7.45pm	Prayer meeting at Church
Wednesdays	
2.00pm	Women's Own – Lower Room
7.45pm	Prayer and Bible Study 21Ganderton Court
Thursdays	
10.15am	House Group 20 Abbeycroft
10.30am	Baby talk
7.45pm	Deacon's Meeting 1st and 3rd Thursdays

There is a **Monthly Communion service** on a Wednesday at 2.30pm

The **Thursday Club** meets in the Lower Room at 7.30pm on the 4th Thursday of each month.

**Church Badminton** is between 8-9pm on 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month in Pershore High School. Details from Anne Sadler.

The **Multiple Sclerosis Group** meet on Monday mornings in the Worship area.

The **St John's Ambulance** use the Upper and Lower Rooms on Tuesday evening.

**U3A Choir** uses the Upper Room on alternate Wednesdays at 2.15pm.

### ROTAS FOR DECEMBER 2008

	7th December	14th December	21st December	28th December
<b>For Sunday</b>				
<b>Readers AM</b>	Ann White	D McBride	E Merry	Mike Taylor
<b>Readers PM</b>	A P Taylor			Impact
<b>Communion preparation</b>	pm A. P Taylor		am J. Gelaky M. Bowley J. Gelaky M. Bowley E. Merry V. McWhirter	
<b>Communion servers</b>				
<b>Pedestal Flower Arrangers</b>		V. McWhirter		S. Dixon
<b>Cleaners</b>		Team D		Team E
<b>Washing up</b>	C. Palfrey The Johns James H David	The Cannings	The Rayners	Church youth Francisca Joanna L
<b>Crèche</b>		Jean Rachel S	Rosemary Becky W	
<b>Xtreme Junior Church</b>	Rehearsals <b>Bubbles</b>	for Christmas	<b>Christmas</b> performance	E. Kirbyson <b>performance</b>
<b>Helper</b>	<b>Helpers</b>	<b>needed</b>		
<b>Pathfinders Music</b>	Rehearsing	Rehearsing	Rehearsing	
<b>Morning Welcome Rota</b>	P. Merry E. Merry	J. Gelaky H. Sheriff	C. McLellan G. McLellan	K. Price B. Price

### ROTAS FOR JANUARY 2009

	4th January	11th January	18th January	25th January
<b>For Sunday</b>				
<b>Readers AM</b>				
<b>Readers PM</b>				Impact
<b>Communion preparation</b>	pm J. Gosney		am Alan Taylor Mary Taylor	
<b>Communion servers</b>			Alan Taylor Mary Taylor Brenda Taylor Mike Taylor	
<b>Pedestal Flower Arrangers</b>		Team F		Team A
<b>Cleaners</b>		The Cannings		Church
<b>Washing up</b>	.C. Palfrey The Johns		The Rayners youth	
<b>Crèche</b>				
<b>Junior Church</b>	<b>Xtreme Bubbles Helper</b> T. Genever S. Dixon T. Hart	<b>Someone needed</b> A. Smith R. Mckay	<b>T. Genever to</b> C. Mee T. Wheeler	<b>T. Genever help</b> A. Mee A. Jones
<b>Pathfinders Music</b>				
<b>Morning Welcome Rota</b>	Alan Taylor Mary Taylor	D. McBride Ann P Taylor	P. Merry E. Merry	J. Gelaky H. Sheriff



There is no **Thursday Club** meeting  
in December

### Woman's Own

- 3rd Diane McBride  
*Advent Theme*
- 17th Mark Jennings  
*Communion Service with  
Christmas readings and carols*



## You are cordially invited to ...A BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION!!!

Guest of Honour: Jesus Christ

Date: Traditionally, December 25th, but he's always around, so the date is flexible.

Time: Whenever you're ready. Please don't be late, though, or you'll miss out on all the fun!

Dress Code: Come as you are, because Jesus will give you fresh, new garments of his righteousness and purity to wear.



## News of the Family

Brenda Taylor's sister Pauline is seriously ill and needs our prayers.

## Angel tidings

The little boy was to be an angel in the Christmas play and his one line was: "Behold, I bring you good tidings." He asked what tidings were and his mother explained that the word meant news. On the night of the play, the youngster had stage fright and, after a long silence, blurted out: "Hey, have I got news for you!"

## The US White House...

### did you know?

It has always been called the White House. But it was not until 1850 that the first bathtub was installed in the presidential residence. Millard Fillmore was the brave executive who took this great step towards cleaner politics.

## Cameo – Women's Group

There is a meeting  
on 12th December  
at 79 Newlands, Pershore.

The film

### "The Nativity"

will be shown.

All ladies are welcome and bring a friend.

More details from Mary Taylor.

## A prayer from Papyri Helper of Men

Helper of men who turn to you,  
Light of men in the dark,  
Creator of all that grows from seed,  
Promoter of all spiritual growth,  
Have mercy, Lord, on me.  
And make me a temple fit for you.  
Do not look too closely at my sins,  
For if you are quick to notice my faults  
I shall not dare to appear before you.

In your great mercy,  
In your boundless love,  
Wash away my sins  
By the hands of Jesus Christ,  
Your only child, the chief healer of souls.

*Found during an archaeological excavation, is very early, probably between second and fourth century.*

## New bank

Mother decided that ten-year old Cathy should get something 'practical' for Christmas. "Suppose we open a savings account for you?" she suggested. Cathy was delighted. "It's your account, darling," mother said as they arrived at the bank, "so you fill out the application." Cathy was doing fine until she came to the space for 'Name of your former bank.' After a slight hesitation, she put down 'Piggy'.

## Congratulations

Following a recent kitchen inspection by the Environmental Health Officer, when we received high praise, I would

like to thank everyone who has helped to maintain our standards as set out in our code of practice.

Congratulations to all and let's keep up the good work

*Eileen Merry*

### It's a Wonderful Life?

One of today's most popular Christmas films is *It's a Wonderful Life*. The film was directed in 1946 by Frank Capra and stars James Stewart and Donna Reid. It concerns the life of George Bailey, the unsung hero of Bedford Falls. Every attempt he makes to leave his humdrum existence in this



small community is constantly thwarted. Although it ends up being a great 'feel-good' movie, in the first part of the film George faces mounting personal and financial problems. Together these bring him to the brink of ruin, despair and suicide, so that he looks back on his life as little more than wasted potential. This really is a story about broken dreams!

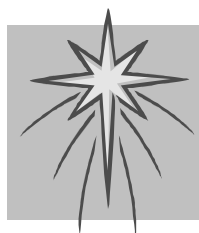
So why is this black and white film from the 1940s still so powerful with audiences? Christmas is an obvious time for us to reflect on how things have gone over the past year. For some it marks the close of a year full of great memories, while others remember only sadness and disappointment. We often look back on a year of broken dreams.

It's also a good time to ask ourselves 'Do I have a Wonderful Life?' I wonder how we find

ourselves responding to this question. Christmas also raises some important questions for our culture about the things that we consider necessary to live a wonderful life, especially in these difficult economic times.

The good news of Christmas concerns a man, born in a stable in Bethlehem, who came to offer everybody the gift of a truly wonderful life. As Jesus said, 'I came so that they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of.' (John 10:10, *The Message*). It is a life which enables us to grasp the purpose for which God created us; a life in relationship with our creator, in which eternity begins today!

Christmas is a time for us to see how



valuable we are as individuals in this world. Without spoiling the film for those who haven't seen it, this is the point at which it ends. With the help of an angel named Clarence (!), George sees that he really has made a different to other people's lives in a way that he never fully appreciated. Like George Bailey, let's make this Christmas is a time of recognising what is important in life and how we too can make a difference!

### As for Christmas itself, let Matthew tell it his way (Matthew 2: 1 - 11)

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."

When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

Then Herod, when he had privately called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

When they had heard of the king, they departed; and lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.



And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

### Christmas and St Luke's Gospel

It is to St Luke's wonderful gospel that many Christians turn as the year draws to a close and Christmas approaches, for it is to St Luke that we owe the fullest account of the nativity. Luke alone tells us the story of Mary and the angel's visit to her, and has thus given the Church the wonderful Magnificat of Mary.

Luke alone tells us the story of Simeon's hymn of praise, thus giving us the wonderful Nunc Dimmittis. Imagine an Anglican evensong without the Nunc Dimmittis.

Luke alone tells us the story of how the angels appeared to the shepherds and how the shepherds then visited the infant Jesus. So - imagine Christmas cards and nativity scenes every year without the shepherds arriving to visit baby Jesus. Imagine school nativity plays without our children dressed as shepherds or sheep. So - thank you, Luke!

What makes it so amazing is that Luke was not a Jew! The man who wrote the fullest nativity story, and indeed more of the New Testament than any other single person, was a Gentile!

## Time gentlemen, please - Hope08 draws to a close - or does it?

The waiter wipes the tables. The barman puts the glasses away. The resident musician closes his piano and grabs his coat. The show has come to an end. Or has it?

We've spent a whole year mobilising our church and community to go out there and do some good. And we've enjoyed it so much, we don't intend to shut the doors on *Hope08*, like a tired old nightclub at closing time.

News has just broken that the national *Hope08* office will be locked up and the team will head on to pastures new. And their parting comment? 'It's not over - it's over to you,' they said.

In fact, they've been doing some investigation - and have found the message has got through already. In attempting to compile a list of locations that are carrying on beyond year's end, *Hope08* researchers have not encountered one place that's stopping!

One of those centres is Cambridge. Apparently, *Hope For Cambridge* is becoming a registered charity - continuing to serve their city in 'word and action' into 2009 and beyond.

'We're carrying on because *Hope08* has been fundamental in getting churches here to operate together,' said local advocate Barrie Woodman, 'in a way they haven't done for years and years.'

Projects that *Hope For Cambridge* will be continuing and developing include - Passion Plays, innovative schools work and various social action projects.

The churches are working with the council in delivering a Christmas carol concert on the local ice rink. They're also planning to launch Street Pastors later this year - an operation Barrie believes 'will need multi-church involvement'. He added, 'We don't want to stop - we want to make sure this carries on'.

We take much inspiration from stories like that. Like the Cambridge churches, we don't want to stop, either. So we'll be doing our own study of our year's activities. We'll stop doing the things that limped along - and carry on with those that set the pace. In a time of economic downturn, it's time to turn up the volume of hope.

To help us keep the flame alive, *Hope08* are producing a revised and re-written resource book that will include the summary of independent evaluation being carried out this year. Scheduled for publication in July 2009, the book will look at what worked, what didn't - and what resources are out there now.

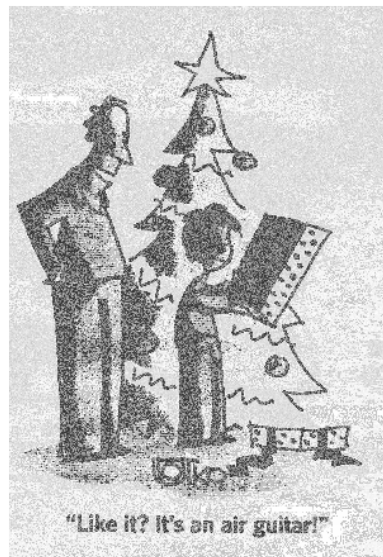
In addition, the official website will offer contacts for key organisers - for places that want to start in 2009 but need to talk to someone.

The words of *Hope08* co-founder and Youth for Christ chief Roy Crowne are an encouragement to us. 'The dream of *Hope08* was to be a catalyst to enable churches to work together to transform communities,' he said. 'So to see something start and then live on is exciting.'

We're excited, too. Let's take hope beyond 2008. Who knows where it might lead?

## Our department store assigned all new staff a three digit code so "Wages" knew what rate to pay. One November we recruited a Santa for our grotto. I asked my manager what his code would be. "0, 0, 0," he replied.

A. Curtis  
Reader's Digest



## The Bells

I heard the bells on Christmas Day  
Their old, familiar carols play,  
And wild and sweet the words repeat  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Longfellow

## An Evening at the Shoebox Warehouse ....

On the evening of Wednesday 19th November a group of us went over to the depot in Evesham to see first hand what goes on. Claudine met us there and showed us round and explained the process from the donated boxes coming in, to being checked and packed in bigger boxes ready to go on the lorries to be taken to their destination. It's like a real Santa's grotto with elves working as many hours as they can to provide children they don't know and will never meet with a moment's happiness on Christmas Day! The atmosphere in the warehouse is amazing - I often heard laughter from across the room somewhere behind a rack full of boxes waiting to be checked, but comments I overheard make you think about what you're doing, like 'just think of the smile on the face of the child who gets this one!'. I bought a calendar and found a poem in there that struck me, the last verse is this:

*'I'm handed down a shoebox,  
it's like a gift from heaven itself.  
Now my face is happy and joyful  
Because I know somebody cares  
about me.'*

It's an amazing place, full of amazing people doing amazing things for others. I would encourage as many of you as possible to go and see it for yourselves. Don't forget the 'send off' service at 3pm on Sunday 7th December too - a great opportunity for family and friends to wish the lorries and drivers a safe journey to somewhere, not actually that far away from us, but a million miles removed from the comforts and luxuries we have. Think about it.

Jacqui John

# Introducing...the young people of our church...



Edwin Batchelor



Matthew Canning



Esther



Isaac



Tom Genever



Annabel Harrison



Ellie Harrison



Daniel Hart



Josh Hart



John Hodgkins



Sophie Jennings



Stephen Jennings



Nathan John



Olly John



Emily Jones



Heather Jones



Alice Kirbyson



Maddy Kirbyson



Amy Liddington



Ben Liddington



Nathan Price



Martha Sadler



Rachel Sadler



Aimee Smith



David Tisdall



Amy Townend



Anna Townend



Ella Townend



Becky Wagner



George Wood

**Monday 5th January 2009 at 7.30pm Saltmine Theatre Company present "An Angel's Delight"**

A brand new festive comedy by David Robinson - a sequel to his hilarious festive comedy, Three Wise Men and a Baby.

St Mary's Literary Society is at it again! This time their overambitious director, Marjorie Lockwood, is convinced the journey of the shepherds is in need of some Broadway razzamatazz.

Not the natural place you might think to find Eric, the vicar, his wife Doreen and faithful church treasurer, Brian Shepherd. But they don their tea towels, grab a shepherds' crook, put on their tap shoes and head for the hills. The result is a mixture of seasonal fun, festive music and unbelievable routines...a real Christmas treat for everyone.

Tickets £8 and £6 (concessions) Cheques payable to PCC Pershore Abbey (please enclose sae). Credit card sales please ring Saltmine Theatre 01384 454808

**Our 'Light' Party**

The lights were set. The stage was ready. The doors were opened and this year's Light Party began! With over twenty children it started with a talk to emphasise why we were here, lead by our very own Rev. Jennings. The evening continued with arts and crafts, parachute games and apple bobbing to name but a few things. The older members of the Church Youth helped the adults with the running

of activities within each group of children. The evening ended with a thought-provoking scene – the children all sat on the floor forming the shape of a cross, each one holding a candle. Mark closed the evening with the 'pumpkin prayer' using a carved pumpkin to show how we can use our eyes, ears and mouth for God. All in all, the evening was a huge success – thanks to Anne Sadler and all those who helped with making cakes etc on the night!

Nathan John

**WANTED: DO YOU KNIT or CROCHET?**

If so we need you. We want to provide warm blankets for children in Serbia and Kyrgyzstan for the winter of 2009.

All you need do is knit/crochet a square 6" x 6", in double knitting wool, and we'll join up the squares to make a child's blanket.

So could start this and produce as many squares as you can by

**September 2009** we'll finish off the job and Samaritans Purse will get the blankets to the orphanages by Christmas 2009.

p.s: we also need wool!! so any oddments you've got would be gratefully accepted. Many thanks Diane McBride and Claudine Mee

**Slum Survivor**

"What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." How can we preach justice, mercy and humility until we have experienced injustice, poverty and humiliation?

The young and young at heart of the church became Christ to Pershore in the last weekend of October, by participating in Slum Survivor. This challenging event was thought of by Soul Action; a charity affiliated with Tear Fund, they provide hope and love in the form of feeding schemes, housing projects and rehabilitation for the street children in Durban and Zimbabwe.

The concept of the weekend was to spend a few days the way a billion people spend a life time. These people are also God's children; they also have a God given hope and a future. There is 1 in 6 people living on the edge of starvation, and over slum survivor we were blessed with the humble experience of a glimpse at this torture.

Over the weekend more than 30 people were involved in different capacities with a maximum of 14 sleeping out. There were 3 slums, of varying quality! Water was to be collected from the car park, nearly a mile away, and as we found later in the weekend, was hard to keep clean. Food was, well, scarce, and not always appetizing.

Spirits were high on the Friday night. Jason, who sleeps rough in Pershore, shared lentils and rice for

dinner with us and judged the girls' slum the best! Later an inspiring Bible study on the Beatitudes was enjoyed by all, including some local youth who joined us. And although no one slept very well, it was agreed that in general the slums were warm, especially the girls' as it was so full!!

Saturday dawned bright and early, and we were hugely blessed by God's excellent weather. We went for a brisk walk and run around Abbey Park before collecting food and cooking equipment, small amounts of rice and lentils were for breakfast. We then had a thought provoking Bible study on HIV and AIDS, and Jesus' heart for the sick, and His awesome grace, which faithfully heals.

The first challenge was to design a game that could be played by slum children, this passed the time and many people stopped to find out what we were doing. This was followed by a long trek to get water.

When the group returned from the water trip they found their slums had been destroyed. The reaction to this I will never forget, I will not forget their shock at the destruction, the silence that ensued and their determined, brave rebuilding.

The next challenge was to forage for acorns! This was not for food! The youth were given the option to collect acorns in their group or to attack the other group, thus preventing them from winning. The point of this was to show how we succeed when we work together, rather than fighting one

another...although it took a few rugby tackles and bruises before this message was clarified!

Later, after the second meal of the day...rice and lentils, we studied Jesus' love for children, how He calls us to learn from their vulnerability and innocence and protect them. This was particularly in relation to the child trafficking that is happening in Africa. It had got very cold by this time, and a restless night followed, with the boys getting up at 3am to repair their leaking slum in the pouring rain.

By Sunday morning it was hard to think, hard to move, hard to smile. We were cold. We were hungry. We were tired. Altogether we made a sorry, quiet group. Yet we still had so much to thank God for. He had blessed us so much, by showing us

that whilst prevalent poverty is not acceptable.

The weekend was finished with an outstanding Impact service, where the youth pulled together and supported one another, through their fatigue, to deliver a service which blessed everyone immensely. From testimony to praising God, it was obvious that the weekend had more than touched their hearts; it had helped to change us from the inside, out.

Is the church a building? No. It is a Godly, Christ like, Grace filled collection of people who, sacrificing time, energy and food, wanted to live for a few days the way a billion spend a lifetime. In God's strength alone we raised over £1000. May God continue to fill us with His spirit; a sovereign spirit which proclaims the good news to the poor, sets captives free and binds up the broken hearted.

*Hannah Cheung*



**On a trip to see** Father Christmas, my friend's son climbed on to Santa's lap and shared his wish list. Later in another shop, he was there again.

"And what would you like for Christmas?" Santa asked. Shaking his head, young lad sighed, "You really need to write these things down."

*Reader's Digest*

## Prayer Calendar for December 2008

1	Jayne Pickering	
2	Ken & Jill Porter	
3	Mike & Wendy Porteus	
4	Ken & Barbara Price	
5	Nick & Yvonne Price & family	
6	Barbara (Joan) Pritchard	
7	<b>Be still, and know that I am God</b>	<i>Psalm 46:10</i>
8	Trevor & Elizabeth Pryce-Jones	
9	Mary Pugh	
10	John & Lee Rawson	
11	Pam & Paul Rayner	
12	Peter & Rosemary Read & family	
13	Andrew & Anne Sadler & family	
14	<b>... Now is the ... day to be helped</b>	<i>2 Corinthians 6:2</i>
15	Hasnah Sheriff	
16	Andy Smith	
17	Simon & Julie Smith & family	
18	Phyllis Smith	
19	Alan & Mary Taylor	
20	Mike & Brenda Taylor	
21	<b>They (all) sang a new song</b>	<i>Revelation 5:9</i>
22	Pete & Ann Taylor	
23	Elisabeth Taylor	
24	Margaret Thomson	
25	<b>HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO JESUS!</b>	
26	Richard & Alison Tisdall & family	
27	Marina Townend & family	
28	<b>The Son of Man came to serve</b>	<i>Matthew 20:17</i>
29	Simon Townend	
30	Peter & Penny Wagner & family	
31	Gemma Watford	

### Editorial

1. Messenger material for the January edition to be in by **noon on Sunday 14th December**. Please observe this **early** deadline.
2. If there are any serious errors/oversights, please tell me!
3. If you would prefer a larger print version of the Messenger, have a word with me.

Thanks **Mike Taylor**

**Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year to you all!**

