



Westgate News June/July 2006

EDITORIAL - CLEANLINESS NEXT TO GODLINESS?

One of the proverbs says, "An empty stable stays clean, there is no profit in an empty stable." (Proverbs 14 v4 New Living Translation).

Whenever we clean our pony's stable out and bed it with nice fresh clean straw, she will immediately soil it. She doesn't seem to like a nice clean bed. However she more than makes up for this giving us a lot of pleasure and pulling our cart so safely.

Perhaps we should rephrase that proverb, "An empty church stays clean, there is no profit in an empty church." What is more important, the cleanliness of our building and its appearance or the people who fill it and soil it a bit?

Simon Lloyd

RIDE 'EM DEREK



Hi everyone, the message from Derek is that life is good and he is making the most of the Sun, Sea and Sand down at Costa Del Whitley Bay. We wanted to share these fabulous photographs with you all.

I have been taking horse-riding lessons for a number of weeks now and was asked to take part in a dressage competition at RDA in Washington.

Guess what....! I won; well they gave me two rosettes. Don't ask me what for, I was

so excited I can't remember - it's a good job my whole family came along and took loads of photos of the occasion. We had a lovely day out with lots of good company, food and of course rain.

Derek and Joan Davison



"BIBLE STUDY"

There are 16 Books of the Bible in this Paragraph....

See how long it takes you to find them....???

"I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible. It was a lulu; kept people looking so hard for facts, and for others, it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the name of the books were not capitalized. But the truth finally struck home to numbers of our readers. To others it was a real job.

We want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you. Yes, there will be some really easy ones to spot. Others may require judges to help find them. I will quickly admit it usually takes a minister to find one of them, and there will be loud lamentations when it is found.

A little lady says she brews a cup of tea so she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete. Relax now, for there really are sixteen names of books of the Bible in this paragraph." *Answer on the last page*

NE1

NE1 is bringing together churches of all denominations across the North East to work in community projects and evangelistic events. Nathan, Shelagh and I had the amazing privilege of attending the official launch of NE1 at the Stadium of Light where we were inspired by the Bishop of Durham to make the most of the opportunities that NE1 will bring.

We hope that our church young people will camp at Herrington Country Park and be involved in outreach in another part of the region. At Westgate, 20 (or more) young people will be with us each day from the 24th to the 28th July. They will clean up the local streets and back lanes and help residents to improve their back yards. In the evenings they will be reaching out to young people who live nearby, inviting them to attend special outreach events at which Christian entertainers, bands and speakers will be clearly proclaiming the Gospel message.

Lots of tasks need to be done behind the scenes to enable this to happen successfully. Please pray for the practicalities but most importantly; ask God to move among our community powerfully to bring many people into His Kingdom through NE1.

Heather Begarnie

"ON OUR KNEES - SUNDAY 11TH JUNE"

'The children have gone missing!'... It's the cry no parent ever wishes to make. To discover that your valuable and vulnerable offspring are not where you thought they were is the stuff of nightmares.

Yet this is the shout we're facing as Baptist churches in the UK. The numbers of children in Baptist churches are falling at a dramatic rate. 30,000 children have left in the last two recorded years. And still more worrying, the suspicion is that this is a

trend that is also happening across the variety of church streams in our nation.

Following this finding, research undertaken by the mission department of the Baptist Union involved sending questionnaires to 640 churches across the denomination, about a third of the total. Churches were asked about the strengths and challenges faced in their work with children, and asked to name five things which encouraged them.

Of those contacted, 241 responded, giving a good cross-section of churches with increasing numbers of children, decreasing numbers or remaining static.

So, the picture in our church stream is mixed. But it still leaves the question, 'where have those 30,000 children gone?'

Various answers are being put forward - from changing children's interests to irrelevant programming, and from the demise of traditional Christian uniformed organisations to the weight on individuals and churches of child protection issues. I suspect the answer will prove to be a complex mix of all these and more.

But wherever these 'lost' children are, one response must be to pray. As a Baptist church, we will join our national church family on Sunday 11th June as we respond to our leaders' call to get on our knees to pray. We must pray that the current rising generation will still get to hear about and experience the Saviour. For, in the spiritual battle, we must take our stand against the one who is attempting rob children of the opportunity to experience Christ's everlasting life.

Paul Merton

KIDZKLUB...

KidzKlub has been running now for about 16 months. We regularly have from 42 to 47 children aged between 5-11 years but not always all the same ones! We do get older and younger children coming to see what happens and some of our older kids return

for visits from YouthKlub! We are thrilled at the way God has grown this work as the group has been built on "word of mouth" from the kids themselves.

The first half of the evening is fairly high energy with lively worship and games. We have found the more outrageous the better would you retrieve a whistle from a bowl of chocolate pudding, using only your mouth, then blow it? Run a race in a huge, jelly filled welly? The things inflicted upon the team leaders are much worse....

The second part of the evening is our quiet teaching time. We learn a verse of scripture and then link that into a Bible story series; this time we're studying Esther. This is followed up with "object lessons" which are ways of teaching the kids how to apply what they've learned. Then we split up into our prayer groups ...this is so important and came from the kids' own desire to pray. Last comes prize time when kids are chosen who have shown good manners, effort and been quiet and attentive during teaching time. We believe that rewarding and acknowledging good behaviour rather than bad is a biblical principle and is strategic to fostering healthy respect.

The children are also visited usually every week by team members. This contact with the family is vital and an important part of what we're trying to achieve...to build relationships with and reach whole families with the love of Christ. Walking the children home, however stressful it can sometimes be trying to keep a watchful eye on them all, is part of the strategy. It is often then that we hear of problems they are encountering at home or school and this informs our prayers and approach.

We are grateful to God that some of the children also come to Young Church on Sundays and for the way they now feel that our church is theirs.

The team is a great bunch who enthusiastically give of their time and energy and love throughout the week not just on a Friday.

Shelagh Garry

YOUNG CHURCH 3-5 YEAR-OLDS GROUP

I would like to share some of the recent developments that have taken place in the 3-5 year old group within Young Church. Prayers for leaders, helpers and children have been answered.

Judith Smith 'retired' after many years' work as a leader. We want to say a huge thank you to Judith for all the time and energy she put into Young Church. Charity Brown has taken on a new role as leader and we welcome Neetha Varghese as a new assistant.

Each Sunday a group of 5 plus children meet - Andrew, Akinwumi, Charlotte, Kieran, Thomas and Precious to name a few, with some recent additions from KidzKlub. It's great to see the children listen to the stories and answer questions, sometimes with astonishing insight.

Some of the topics we've talked about include God's creation and provision of materials, as well as knowing Jesus as our friend. It's been encouraging to watch the group develop and to see the children singing, praying and playing together. As a church we are very privileged to have these young people and we ask that you will pray for each child as they grow up within our church, that they will be protected and come to know Jesus as their friend and Saviour.

Ruth Hall

GRANGE ROAD HOUSEGROUP

This group meets at the Merton's on alternate Wednesday nights. They are studying the first book of Corinthians as they want to learn what the Bible teaches about foreign gods and other faiths, when they eventually get there, as they work their way through the book.

The membership includes Paul and Alison, Ken and Dorothy Brown, Fiona Le Geyt, Colin and Ruth Rees, Duncan and Lisa McNulty when baby-sitting permits, and is led by David Carribine.

They have found attendance has varied. So when there has only been a small number they have concentrated on both sharing and praying for each other's needs. Then studying when more are present.

Simon Lloyd

GUIDANCE

When I preached on how the Holy Spirit guides us recently I didn't have time to include a second personal experience. This happened twenty years ago when a group of us went to a week's retreat at Gold Hill Baptist church near London.

During the week I went forward for prayer for healing. I have polycystic kidneys and growing cysts were slowly destroying them. Doctors had predicted that I would probably get to total kidney failure in about 10 years from then.

I was prayed for by a woman with an effective healing ministry but I was not healed. So I prayed and asked the Lord why I hadn't been healed? I got back the clear answer, "My plan for you is for you to go through kidney failure."

That answer was at first sight frightening. My father died from acute kidney failure in 1967. We had watched him slowly die for the 4 preceding years. So that prospect was not pleasant.

The positive side was I understood God's plan for me was to go onto dialysis and then have my health restored by a transplant. That was positively encouraging.

In August '97 I went onto dialysis, then got a kidney transplant 14 months later, on 2nd October '98. All the Holy Spirit had told me has happened.

My own experience is that God does answer our prayers and on occasions show us what we are facing in the future.

Simon Lloyd

SYKES NEWS

Greetings from a coolish Dimapur. Looking at the newspapers it seems we left Delhi just in time as the weather has got well into the mid 40s. Here it's hot but still cool in the nights and we have some rain to help bring things down.

Things are very different and not always easy. Most people are very cautious of us so come across as being unfriendly. The way of life is not so correct and we find trying to keep honest values goes against the grain. Language wise it's a real mixture of Hindi, Tamil, English and Nagamease not mentioning the tribal languages.

There is a small Ao Baptist church at the end of our Drive which we have been attending, they sing all their songs unaccompanied and sound wonderful. It's all in their tribal tongue but we get the idea.

So Delhi seems a long way from here and not a day goes by when we don't think of our friends there and of course the children at the centre. We ourselves and Jack and his wife Shirley would very much value your prayers for our safety and the project.

*Tony & Judith Sykes,
BMS Missionaries*

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

- Are you good with computers? Would you like to operate the multimedia system? If you would the team need extra members and will be happy to give instruction to work you into the team. See Donald Daly.
- Want to have a go at operating a professional mixer desk and sound system? If so the P.A. team would like to help you get involved. See either Alan Haswell or Simon Lloyd

PLUGGING THE GAPS

If you become aware of something not being done as well as you think it could be done at WBC, is this possibly God pointing out that you could make things better by being more involved yourself?

Maybe the person who carries this responsibility is worn out with overwork or just needs a break! Or maybe you hadn't given a second thought to all the jobs that need to be done to ensure services run as smoothly as they do and everyone is cared for when they come. Even if you aren't sure what would be involved, why not take a minute or two to ask?

We are very happy to give opportunities for training where necessary and would love to encourage the development of more people's 'servant hearts'.

Please speak to me or to Irene Baxter if you want to accept the challenge or just want to know more.

Angela Wilson

TURNING POINT UPDATE

You may recall that back in February I was helping organise a mission week in the Tipton Halls of Residence in Sheffield called Turning Point.

The week was a success with all events having a greater turnout than expected. As the week progressed we had more and more people asking about God. We had 2 DVD nights showing "Mr and Mrs Smith" and "Batman Begins". Also we held two grill-a-Christian events, which had people asking questions and chatting to various members of the panel after the event had officially finished.

Our biggest and best attended event was for the comedian John Archer who performed for an hour and gave a short talk at the end challenging people to think about Christianity. Three nights of the week we held free food give-aways. These were

opportunities to serve the hall and caused residents to ask why we were doing it.

The Christians in Tipton grew as a community and are more like a family now. Many of them have grown in faith through the support of other Christians and time spent in the prayer room.

We are now well on in an Alpha course which is growing weekly with about 15 people attending.

Thank you for all your support.

Andrew Carribine

SHEPHERD'S CORNER - BOTTLERS

This year we have bottle fed three lambs. Each has been a bit different. The eldest, Bunty is a triplet and was easy to get feeding. As soon as I put the bottle teat into her mouth she sucked heartily.

The second lamb Dolly is also a triplet. When we started to bottle feed her she took several feeds before she really got the hang of it and has always been a bit of a slow drinker.

The third lamb was rejected by his mother. She wouldn't feed him and was knocking him around so we had to put him onto the bottle as well. As he had been fed with a stomach tube and was a "tuber" we called him Spud.

Spud was all tucked up and looked terrible with little flesh and a prominent backbone. However good feeding meant he slowly filled out and has become a good chunky lamb.

Bunty, Dolly and Spud have all required different care. It's just the same with young Christians. Some take to the Bible and feed on it avidly and grow well. Some require a lot of help until they too get really going.

Simon Lloyd

QUIZ NIGHT AT HOLY CROSS CHURCH.

Saturday 8th July 7.30pm. Faith Supper. 2 Small prizes needed. £1 per Team Member. Raffle, Tombola. In aid of West End Refugee Service. Please let Joan Lidgate know if you are taking part.

MUSIC EXTRAVAGANZA - Linda Mutunga is organising a 'Music Extravaganza' (see posters in hall & foyer) featuring 2 live bands here at WBC on Saturday 10th June from 7pm. Tickets are free and are available from Linda herself, or from Angela in the Church Office.

THREE DAYS OF MISSION on the theme - 'God's Love' (John 3 v 16) are to be held on Friday 16th & Saturday 17th June at 7.30pm & Sunday 18th June at 10.30am here at WBC with Paul Merton speaking. There will be intercessory prayer times to support this Mission every Thursday at 7.30pm in the church lounge. All are welcome.

Christian Lombe has specifically asked us to pray that as the leaflets are distributed both in the local area and next Saturday 10th June at the Monument, God will touch people to respond and come to the Mission events.

SALTMINE THEATRE COMPANY present two performances at Peoples Theatre in June.

- Monday 19th June **Screwtape Letters** by C.S. Lewis;
- Tuesday 20th June - **The Hiding Place**, the story of Corrie Ten Boom. Details in foyer.

OUR CHURCH AND HUB FAMILY FUN DAY takes place on **Saturday 1st July**. Please make sure you book this date in your diary. Please speak to Joan Davison, Shelagh Garry or Ron Wilson soon if you are willing to help in any way. Anyone able and willing to bake or make jams, pickles etc, would be much appreciated too.

ANSWER TO QUIZ

" I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible. It was a lulu; kept people looking so hard for facts, and for others, it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the name of the books were not capitalized. But the truth finally struck home to numbers of our readers. To

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CONTRIBUTIONS - I am very grateful to all those who have written articles at short notice as well as to the team who check each edition, correct errors and then get each edition printed.

I am always on the lookout for articles, photos of events, personal testimonies etc. If you would like to contribute could you please contact me.

Please get articles for the August edition to me by Thursday 27th July.

You can contact me direct at church or e-mail me at lloyds@uku.co.uk.

Donald Daly is in the process of arranging a meeting to review the Westgate News. If you would like to be involved or even help produce it please see him.

Simon Lloyd

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