

Wesley Services – December 2009

	6th	13th	20th	27th	3rd Jan
10-30 am	Mr J Birch	Rev F Randall (HC)	Miss A Wheeler	Mr J Birch	Mr J Birch
6-00 pm	Rev F Randall (HC)	n.b. Please note that there is only an evening service on the first Sunday in every month.			Rev F Randall (HC) Covenant

Vestry
 Dec 6th a.m. Lorette Hinson
 p.m. Joan Edwards
 Dec 13th a.m. Margaret Birch
 20th a.m. Hilary Gould
 p.m. Lorette Hinson
 24th Lorette Hinson
 27th a.m. Angela Vooght
 Jan 3rd a.m. Lorette Hinson
 p.m. Joan Edwards
 10th a.m. Margaret Birch

Door
 Dec 6th a.m. Marjorie Hinson
 p.m. Graham Edwards
 13th a.m. Peter Sharp
 20th a.m. Sue and Roger
 p.m. Marjorie Hinson
 24th Marjorie Hinson
 27th a.m. Hope Ackrill
 Jan 3rd a.m. Marjorie Hinson
 p.m. Graham Edwards
 10th a.m. Peter Sharp

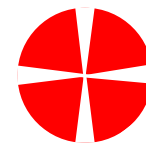
Communion
 Dec 6th p.m. Lorette Hinson
 Dec 13th a.m. Lorette Hinson

It is Christmas every time you let God love others through you...yes, it is Christmas every time you smile at your brother and offer him your hand.
 --Mother Teresa

Christmas gift suggestions: To your enemy, forgiveness. To an opponent, tolerance. To a friend, your heart. To a customer, service. To all, charity. To every child, a good example. To yourself, respect.
 -- Oren Arnold

The very purpose of Christ's coming into the world was that He might offer up His life as a sacrifice for the sins of men. He came to die. This is the heart of Christmas.
 --Rev. Billy Graham

The Advent mystery is the beginning of the end of all in us that is not yet Christ.
 --Thomas Merton



In Touch

Wesley Methodist Church, Carmarthen

December 2009



Just a thought....

As we approach our first Christmas in our new home here in Wales, I'm here reminiscing about the many happy Christmases we spent 'up north' in Oldham and like any area it had its own particular Christmas traditions.

One abiding memory is that of the pantomime at the Oldham Coliseum. It felt like everyone in the town went to it and you were guaranteed to meet someone you knew whatever performance you attended. It always had a long run with every performance more or less full. And this was without a famous face or any celebrity anywhere in the line up! It really was a feel good community event.

Many of you will know I'm sure, that Oldham and particularly the villages of Saddleworth where we lived, is brass band country. Every village has at least one band club with many of these clubs boasting two adult bands as well as a junior band. Just in case the festive season was escaping you in Saddleworth then you would be powerfully and audibly reminded with the many brass bands that would come round the village with the musicians sat on the back of a trailer blasting out the Christmas carols as they collected money for their funds - something that was always met with great excitement in our house as the children ran to the door to hear the carols.

Each year Saddleworth Music Society held a Christmas concert and the choir from Alys and Edward's school would sing as part of that. In the run up to this it always felt like *yet another thing to do* but every single time we went we were blessed with the fabulous musical pieces, rousing congregational singing and the children smiling their way through their performance. A highlight for me was to

hear all the descant parts to our familiar carols being sung so well by the choir and it never failed to make ones hair stand on end.

At Christmastime every service, in every church in the area seemed contain 'While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks By Night'. It didn't seem to matter where you went that carol would be sung, but not to the tune that you might be familiar with but to 'Mount Zion' a rousing number with many repeats. Now it being Christmas, I'd attend services at my own church, around the circuit in my capacity as a lay worker and local preacher as well as in the village where we lived in connection with the children's school. It would get to the point where I no longer was able to sing that carol for fear of losing my voice!

Whilst every area has its own traditions around Christmas each of us knows that it's not really the pantomimes, the brass bands or even Christmas concerts which are the main event this time of year- whatever part of the country they happen in. It's a far bigger deal than any of those activities for Christmas reminds us how Jesus- Immanuel- came to earth to live as one of us. This was to be an event to change the world, an event that was never and can never be limited to one place, or even one time and an event which makes for a very happy Christmas as we thank God for the wonderful gift of Jesus Christ.

I wish you all a Christmas filled with peace, joy and blessing.
 Felicity

(Felicity's study day is Tuesday and her day off is Saturday)

November Coffee Mornings

Nov 4th £77.10
Nov 11th 77.59
Nov 18th 72,20
Nov 25th 67.07
Total £293,96

The average figure was £73.49, which is very good considering the time of year and the horrid wet and windy weather. Obviously our regulars must really appreciate the coffee and the fellowship that they find at Wesley on a Wednesday morning.

Coffee and Carols

A reminder that at the coffee morning on 16th Dec there will be carols alongside the coffee and biscuits as we welcome the Morfa Madrigal Singers, and they share Christmas music old and new to get you into the seasonal mood!

Christmas Cards

It was agreed at our recent Council meeting, that an opportunity would be given for anyone that may wish to give to charity rather than send Christmas cards to each other within the Church. If you wish to take part, then from November a poster will be placed within Church for you to sign and leave any Christmas message. The charity will be Christian Aid, and when all monies have been received at Christmas we will send a gift via Present Aid. A catalogue will also be available for you to see. Please put your donation in an envelope marked 'Christmas card donation' and place in offertory bag any Sunday during December.
Thank you.

Church Bulletin Howlers

These are reputed to have appeared in Church bulletins somewhere:

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our community. Smile at someone who is hard to love. Say 'Hell' to someone who doesn't care much about you

Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.

Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 PM.
Please use the back door.

Christmas Celebrations

Do take an invitation card for our Christmas activities and pass it on to a friend or neighbour:-

13th December at 10.30am
All age Christmas celebration & bring & share lunch

16th December at 11 - 12am
Coffee and carols at our regular coffee morning.

20th December at 6pm
Join us for our Carol service

24th December at 11.30pm
Christmas Eve communion service

25th December at 9.30am
Christmas Day service at Zion Presbyterian Church

Christmas in Bethlehem



Orthodox procession in the Nativity Church

As one might imagine, Christmas in Bethlehem, the city where Jesus was born, is a major event. Some of Bethlehem's Christmas celebrations would be familiar to us - the streets are strung with Christmas lights, there is a Christmas market and Christmas plays are performed.

But other events, which are the most important religiously, are special to Bethlehem and in

keeping with the traditions of the Holy Land. These consist of multiple services and processions led by many different Christian denominations, including Catholic, Protestant, Greek Orthodox, Ethiopian, Armenian and more.

Most Christmas processions pass through Manger Square, the plaza outside the Basilica of the Nativity, which stands on the traditional site of Jesus' birth. Catholic services take place in St. Catherine's Church and Protestants often hold services at the Shepherds' Fields.

Bethlehem Christmas celebrations stretch for a long period, as different denominations celebrate Christmas on different days. Roman Catholics and Protestants celebrate Christmas on December 25; Greek, Syrian and other Orthodox Christians celebrate Christmas on January 6; and Armenian Christians celebrate Christmas on January 18.

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"We have a strange illusion that mere time cancels sin."
C.S.Lewis

"It is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child Himself."
Charles Dickens

Thanks to Ondrej Paska (See Matthew 14:24-33) 01-04-2008
PETER FINDS HIS FAITH TO BE MUCH STRONGER IN THE WINTER